

Jordan Times

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£300m missing from Maxwell pensions

LONDON (R) — More than £300 million (\$540 million) is still missing from pension funds of companies owned by the late media tycoon Robert Maxwell, an investigator said Tuesday. The investigator, a court-appointed liquidator, said he had traced over half of the more than £700 million (\$1.27 billion) held in the funds, but it was not clear whether it could be recovered. "We believe we know the whereabouts of some £400 million (\$724 million)," said Neil Cooper, liquidator for the Maxwell-owned Bishopsgate Investment Management. Mr. Cooper, of an accountancy firm Robson Rhodes, declined to say where the missing assets were. But he said teams of people were trying to trace assets not yet accounted for and were working to establish ownership claims. Investigators originally said that £426 million (\$760 million) was missing from the pension funds of Maxwell Communication Corporation and Mirror Group newspapers. They said some of the money was transferred via Bishopsgate and another Maxwell company, London and Bishopsgate International Investment Management. Margaret Cole, senior partner of Robson Rhodes' lawyers Stephenson Harwood, said there could be conflicting claims on the assets that had been traced.

Regent meets Iranian delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, received Tuesday at the Royal Court the deputy speaker of the Iranian Shura Council and an accompanying delegation. The delegation arrived in Amman Monday and left after the meeting with the Regent. In his meeting, Prince Hassan stressed the importance of coordinating stands among Islamic countries and affirmed that Jordan, which lies in the heart of the Islamic world, will always support its rights and the rights of the Arabs. Prince Hassan said differences in views sometimes stem from ignorance on safeguarding public interest and called for enhancing relations between Jordan and Iran. The Iranian delegation expressed their admiration of the ancient Islamic ruins in Jordan and stressed the need to step up efforts in maintaining and renovating tombs of Al-Sahaba in Mu'ta near Karak. They expressed interest in the events taking place in the occupied Arab territories and expressed readiness to support the Palestinian people in their struggle against Israeli occupation. The meeting was attended by Lower House of Parliament Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat and the Minister of Islamic Affairs Izzeddine Al-Khatib Al-Tamimi. (See related story page 3)

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Ukraine parliament ratifies accord

KIEV (R) — Ukraine's parliament Tuesday ratified an accord between three Slav republics setting up a new commonwealth to replace the Soviet Union. Deputies voted by a large majority to approve the agreement without debate after President Leonid Kravchuk appealed for their support and bitterly attacked Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Of the 367 deputies present 288 voted for ratification (see earlier story on page 8).

De Klerk cancels trip to Moscow

JOHANNESBURG (R) — President F.W. de Klerk has cancelled a visit to Moscow scheduled to begin Friday, a South African Foreign Ministry spokesman said Tuesday. The spokesman declined to elaborate but the cancellation is thought to be the result of instability in the Soviet Union. The planned visit had been seen as a milestone in ending decades of enmity between South Africa's white government and a Soviet leadership sympathetic to the black opposition. Nelson Mandela, leader of the African National Congress which at one time received most of its support from the once-communist East bloc, has previously called off planned visits to Moscow because of scheduling problems.

German president visits Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — German President Richard von Weizsäcker came to Israel for a private visit Tuesday to attend a charity concert that will raise money for Jewish immigrants. During the "19-hour" visit, his second since 1985, Mr. von Weizsäcker also was to lay a wreath at a memorial and meet with Israeli President Chaim Herzog and Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. The Tuesday night concert was to feature the Staatskapelle Dresden, an orchestra of the eastern German town of Dresden. The concert originally was scheduled for Feb. 12, 1991, in Tel Aviv, following a similar charity performance in Dresden. But the Tel Aviv performance was cancelled because of the Gulf war during which the coastal city repeatedly was the target of Iraqi missiles.

WEU to negotiate Greek membership

MAASTRICHT, Netherlands (R) — Foreign Ministers of the Western European Union (WEU), the nine-member defence grouping, agreed in principle on Tuesday to allow Greece to join by the end of 1992, a British official said. The official told a news conference any other European Community member would also be allowed to apply for membership and the WEU would give Turkey, Greece's uneasy Mediterranean neighbour, the chance to take a full part in its activities.

Iran floods kill 22

NICOSIA (R) — Floods have killed 22 people in Iran as the fiercest winter storms in over 50 years sweep parts of the Middle East. The Iranian toll, heaviest in the region so far, was reported on Tuesday by the official news agency IRNA. It said torrential rain and snow had lashed 30 cities, towns and villages in five provinces over the past week, triggering destructive floods. Altogether 22 people had died in the flood-hit provinces of Bushehr on the Gulf and Ilam in the mountainous west. Elsewhere hundreds of villages were cut off by heavy snow.

FBI trying to identify hostage-takers

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is trying to identify those responsible for taking 17 American hostages in Lebanon since 1984 with an eye to bringing them to justice, the agency's chief spokesman said. "We are investigating in an attempt to determine who the hostage-takers are and certainly to have them prosecuted," FBI spokesman Thomas Jones said.

Israeli refusal to meet Palestinians separately threatens bilaterals

By Jordan Times Staff Reporters in Washington

ARAB-ISRAELI bilateral talks resumed in the U.S. capital yesterday, but the issue of independent Palestinian representation overshadowed the negotiations and threatened to bring them to a premature halt.

The Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli talks took place on schedule, albeit a week later than originally planned. The Jordanians and Palestinians, however, could meet the Israelis only outside the officially designated rooms and at the level of heads of delegations.

The Lebanese and the Israelis finished their meeting early and scheduled another meeting for 2 p.m. in the afternoon (Washington time). The Israelis offered the Lebanese a reconciliation treaty, "which is some form of a super peace treaty, since the Israelis do not cover Lebanese territory," but it was unclear what the Lebanese response was.

The gap between the Israelis and the Syrians, as expected, was very wide, since the two sides could not see eye to eye on anything, and the Syrians decided not to have another meeting with the Israelis until tomorrow, pending, as their sources said, a resolution of the independent Palestinian representation.

The joint Jordanian-Palestinian team went back to the State Department, the official venue of the negotiations, for a meeting at 4 p.m. (Washington time) and there were low expectations of whether the two sides could agree on a formula for solving their major problem, of separating the Palestinian and Jordanian sides in negotiations with the Israelis.

"We offered a number of compromise solutions (over splitting the joint delegation) to the Israeli chief negotiator but he said he could not commit himself," according to Jordanian spokesman and delegate Marwan Munsheer.

The Israelis insist on keeping the joint delegation together, apparently because they do not believe in a separate identity and for fear of highlighting this identity to the world, according to Arab delegates.

"It is not a problem of one or two sub-committees," said Dr. Munsheer. "It is a fundamental problem of whether we have a clear Jordanian-Israeli track and a Palestinian-Israeli track," he stressed in a news conference after the first session of the second round of bilateral talks, which were launched in Madrid last month.

The Israelis insist that the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation sit in one room at the U.S.-designed site and insist on the Palestinian agenda be "discussed in a sub-committee form" within the joint delegation.

Dr. Hanan Ashrawi spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, told reporters that the Palestinian issue "is the core of the conflict" between Israel and the Arabs and urged Israel to engage in direct negotiations.

"We want to talk to you (Israel) directly and if peace is made between Palestinians and Israelis, the way would be prepared for comprehensive peace but you cannot negate the Palestinian identity," she said in a press conference at the end of the Tuesday morning talks.

(Continued on page 4)

U.S.: Jordan abides by Iraq sanctions

WASHINGTON — The U.S. State Department said Tuesday that Jordan was abiding by international sanctions against Iraq and that the "seepage" of imports to Iraq was negligible.

State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said that there was seepage of imports to Iraq via Turkey and Jordan by private businessmen but deflected both governments' actions.

"In neither case are those activities sanctioned by the Jordanian or Turkish government. We are encouraged by the response and responsible measures taken by both governments," Ms. Tutwiler told reporters in her daily afternoon briefing.

"We do not believe that the seepage that does occur contributes in an appreciable way to Iraq's ability to reconstruct its infrastructure," she added.

Ms. Tutwiler's remarks were made after several members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which oversees American foreign assistance, raised concerns that \$45 million in military aid to Jordan should be suspended until Washington is satisfied that it is not breaking the embargo.

Administration officials and Ms. Tutwiler said that most of the imports flowing to Iraq fall into the food, medical supplies and other humanitarian aid, which are permitted under United Nations guidelines.

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(Continued on page 4)

U.S. experts doubt Israel could repay \$10b loan

WASHINGTON (R) — Israel is trying to dispel doubts over its economic health raised by two U.S. expert reports that suggested the Jewish state might have problems in repaying \$10 billion in loans it is trying to raise.

"The (pro-Israel) lobby is busy trying to convince people that the Export-Import Bank and the Congressional Research Service (CRS) were unduly pessimistic," said a congressional aide. "The line is that Israel can handle a lot more debt than it had in the past."

After surfacing in the prelude to Arab-Israeli peace talks, which opened on Tuesday, the issue of Israel's ability to service additional debt will figure in Congress next month when Israel revives a request for the \$10 billion in loan guarantees.

These would provide for the U.S. treasury to pledge government funds to cover defaults in commercial loans Israel is planning to obtain in \$2 billion instalments over five years.

While the Bush administration has indirectly tied the issue to progress in the peace talks, congressional staffers say Israel might have problems getting the

guarantees on purely economic grounds.

A CRS report last September said an additional \$10 billion in foreign loans would increase by 42 per cent Israel's total external debt. Servicing that debt would require a substantial increase in foreign currency earnings.

"Interest payments on \$10 billion would require a net increase of \$50 million in Israel's annual earnings on goods and services," according to the report.

"By comparison, from the end of 1985 to 1990, the goods and services balance, excluding defence imports, deteriorated by 1.5 billion. A major reversal of past trends would therefore be required."

Both the CRS and a confidential report by the U.S. Export-Import Bank earlier this year insist that higher hard-currency earnings would be difficult to achieve without far-reaching reforms to an economy dominated by the state and the Histadrut labour federation.

Israel, by far the biggest recipient of U.S. assistance, wants the loans to provide housing and

(Continued on page 4)

CIA chief voices alarm over situation in Soviet Union

WASHINGTON (AP) — Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Robert Gates said Tuesday the Soviet Union was "dangerously unstable" and predicted the worst civil disorder since the communist revolution in 1917. The U.S. ambassador to Moscow questioned survival of the new three-republic commonwealth.

Mr. Gates, testifying before the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee, said he was concerned that democratic forces could be overwhelmed by chaos.

In a Washington speech, Ambassador Robert Strauss said strong opposition to the "commonwealth of independent states" could bring its downfall and said frustration in the Soviet military could lead to another coup.

Mr. Gates detailed deteriorating discipline and morale in the formerly powerful Red Army, saying "readiness is at its lowest level in decades." And he voiced worry over control of the Soviet arsenal of 30,000 nuclear

weapons as Moscow's central command is thrown into question.

"Severe economic conditions, including substantial shortages of food and fuel in some areas, the disintegration of the armed forces, and ongoing ethnic conflict will combine this winter to produce the most significant disorder in the former USSR since the Bolsheviks consolidated power," Mr. Gates testified.

The comments came in an opening statement before the panel closed its doors to hear classified testimony on future security threats to the United States.

The Soviet system for maintaining control of its long-range and tactical nuclear weapons is an elaborate one that has proven effective for decades, Mr. Gates noted. "But the centre is evaporating before our eyes."

At one point in his statement, Mr. Gates referred to the disintegrating superpower as the "arsenal that used to be a country."

EC urges end to settlements

MAASTRICHT, Netherlands (R) — The European Community (EC), striking an optimistic note on Middle East peace prospects, called Tuesday for a halt to Israeli settlements on Arab land and an end to the Arab economic boycott of Israel.

In a declaration issued by summit leaders last Tuesday, the EC said it was vitally important that the momentum of the U.S.-Soviet sponsored Madrid Middle East peace conference not be dissipated on procedural wrangling.

"The European council considers a halt to Israel's settlement activity in the occupied territories an essential contribution to creating the stable environment which progress in the negotiations requires. Renunciation of the Arab trade boycott is another," the statement said.

The statement, issued on the day Israel and its Arab neighbours were to resume direct talks in Washington after a week of procedural disputes, spoke of "an atmosphere of hope" which must not be disappointed.

The community called for a tangible improvement in the situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip even before interim arrangements for Palestinian self-government were implemented.

It noted reports of a decline in violence in the occupied territories since the Madrid conference.

The EC, which attended the peace conference as an observer, pledged to work actively with the United States and the Soviet Union to promote the peace process and make a practical contribution to forthcoming multilateral talks on economic development, arms control, water and ecology in the Middle East.

In a veiled criticism of Syria, which has vowed to boycott the multilateral talks, it voiced hope that all parties in the region would participate.

But in an acknowledgment of Arab concerns, it added: "Regional cooperation cannot progress faster than movement towards a political settlement."

A separate statement deplored the fact that two Germans, Heinrich Struëbig and Thomas Kemp-tner, were still being detained in Lebanon after the release of other Western hostages.



King calls on Muslim World to ensure human rights, democracy

Combined agency dispatches

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein Tuesday called on the Muslim World to ensure respect for human rights and the right of all people to think freely and creatively and to participate in determining their fate and future through democracy.

"Since the good of the community necessitates justice, democracy becomes essential in building the just

King returns

His Majesty King Hussein returned home from Dakar late Tuesday

society to ensure the widest participation in thought and action in the progress towards the achievement of human rights in freedom and equality — principles inculcated by freedom" the

King told the sixth summit of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) in Dakar, Senegal.

The King, addressing the summit on its second day, emphasised the need for cooperation among Islamic states to help each other resolve problems and also called for a comprehensive Islamic plan to end regional and boundary problems among

(Continued on page 4)

Palestinians under harsh Israeli curfew

RAMALLAH, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Israel kept Palestinians clamped under curfew for a 10th day on Tuesday — the day it agreed to resume Middle East peace talks.

Two occupied West Bank towns, one of them the home of Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi, languished under one of the harshest Israeli collective punishments for months.

About 60,000 people were affected by the clampdown in Ramallah, Al-Bireh and surrounding villages, imposed after unknown men ambushed and killed a Jewish settler.

Elsewhere in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, curfews on 800,000 Arabs to coincide with Monday's fourth anniversary of the Palestinian uprising were mostly lifted. Military sources said restrictions were still in place

in the centre of Gaza City and a small refugee camp.

The army lifted a round-the-clock curfew in Ramallah and Al-Bireh for three hours on Tuesday. Thousands of Palestinians emptied food shelves and whisked hot bread from the few bakeries that opened in a race to restock depleted larders.

"It is far from over. It seems we are in for a long time," said one shopper as he filled a sack with oranges at a vegetable store.

The army has lifted the curfew for three to four hours once every three days to allow people to buy food. But little was available because grocers were barred from going to occupied Jerusalem for fresh supplies.

Security sources said hundreds of Palestinians had been rounded up for questioning about the Dec. 1 ambush of the settler.

Although curfews have become routine in the occupied territories, the army says the search operation in Ramallah — where Dr. Ashrawi lives — and nearby Al-Bireh is the biggest it has mounted in months. Armed Jewish settlers rampaged through parts of Ramallah on Monday and attacked Arab cars.

"Expansions delayed"

The Hebrew daily Haaretz reported Tuesday that Israel had delayed expelling several Palestinian activists so as not to anger the United States.

The newspaper, quoting an unnamed Israeli source, said the delay was "for a short period of time ... in order not to raise disagreement with the Americans."

(Continued on page 4)

EC leaders deadlocked on social policy

MAASTRICHT, Netherlands (R) — Deadlock with Britain over workers' rights threatened to wreck a European Community (EC) treaty on political and monetary union on Tuesday despite agreements on a single currency and sharing wealth.

Conservative Prime Minister John Major told an EC summit Britain had fundamental objections to extending EC powers to labour law. He branded compromise proposals by the community's Dutch presidency unacceptable.

Socialist French President Francois Mitterrand, who along with Germany, Italy and Belgium described the compromise as too weak, threatened to veto the treaty unless its social provisions were improved, his spokesman Jean Minsitelli said.

Mr. Mitterrand challenged Britain to simply opt out of social rules as it plans to do on a single EC currency, but a British official said that was not satisfactory.

"Frankly we are in a stalemate and it is worrying," Mr. Minsitelli said.

The 12 leaders endorsed an agreement by finance ministers to introduce a single currency, managed by an independent European central bank, at the latest by 1999 and perhaps as early as 1997 if at least seven members meet strict economic criteria.

Britain accepted an opt-out clause which gives it alone the right to decide later whether and when it joins monetary union.

Spain said the summit had resolved satisfactorily demands by poorer states, also including Portugal, Greece and Ireland, for a fairer share of EC wealth.

The treaty text promised the creation next year of a fund to provide more money from richer states for the four poorest.

"I can announce that the questions related to cohesion have been put in a protocol which is legally binding ... as Prime

Minister (Felipe) Gonzalez wanted," government spokesman Miguel Gil told a news conference. "Spain is satisfied."

Leaders earlier agreed to drop any reference to federalism from the treaty, a concession to Britain which had threatened to veto any text containing the dreaded "F-word."

In parallel talks, foreign ministers of the nine-nation Western European Union made progress towards a European defence identity, offering Greece talks on membership. That would leave only EC members Denmark and neutral Ireland outside the wcu.

But social policy remained the crucial sticking point. Dutch Secretary of State for Europe Piet Dankert told reporters: "There is no compromise on a social policy text possible. No way today."

Danish Foreign Minister Uffe Ellemann-Jensen said: "There is a possibility that the whole thing is going to collapse on this ques-

tion. We have all been in these kinds of negotiations before. It looks dark and even darker than it usually does."

A Spanish spokesman said nobody could tell how long the summit, originally scheduled to end on Tuesday, would go on or how it would end.

"It's arm wrestling, we shall see how it ends," Italian government spokesman Pio Mastrobuoni said.

The confrontation reflected what Mr. Dankert called "a cultural difference between the continentals and the United Kingdom" over the scope of the community and the idea of minimum European standards for the protection of workers.

France's European Affairs Minister Elisabeth Guigou said: "We don't want just a Europe of travelling salesmen, a big free trade zone. These (social) elements are important for us and we want to see them in the treaty." Related story on page 7.

Perez de Cuellar blames Iraq for war with Iran

UNITED NATIONS (R) — U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, in a report on Tuesday, blamed Iraq for starting the eight-year-long Iran-Iraq war.

His report was in compliance with a 1987 resolution that led to a ceasefire the following year and asked the secretary-general to explore inquiring into responsibility for the conflict.

"It is evident that the war between Iran and Iraq, which was going to be waged for so many years, was started in contravention of international law, and violations of international law give rise to responsibility for the conflict," he wrote.

The secretary-general said the "outstanding event under the violations referred to ... is the attack of 22 September 1980 against Iran, which cannot be justified under the charter of the United Nations, any recognised rules and principles of international law or any principles of international morality and entails the responsibility for the conflict."

Mr. Perez de Cuellar added: "Even if before the outbreak of the conflict there had been some encroachment by Iran on Iraqi territory, such encroachment did not justify Iraq's aggression against Iran — which was followed by Iraq's continuous occupation of Iranian territory during the conflict — in violation of the prohibition of the use of force, which is regarded as one of the rules of jus cogens." Jus

cogens is a legal term meaning a peremptory norm of international law.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar said although elements of the two sides' positions were known to him, he sent identical letters on Aug. 14 to the governments of Iran and Iraq asking for their comprehensive views concerning the subject matter of paragraph 6 of Resolution 598, which dealt with the question of responsibility for the war.

The secretary-general said he also consulted separately some independent experts, whom he did not identify.

He said the Iraqi reply, dated Aug. 26, "is not a substantial one therefore I am bound to reply on explanations given by Iraq earlier. That these explanations do not appear sufficient or acceptable to the international community is a fact."

But, after placing responsibility for the war on Iraq, Mr. Perez de Cuellar continued: "In my opinion it would not seem to serve any useful purpose to pursue paragraph 6 of Resolution 598 (1987)."

"In the interest of peace and in line with the implementation of Resolution 598 (1987) as a comprehensive peace plan, it is now imperative to move on with the settlement process. It is the careful construction of peaceful relations between the parties and of peace and security in the whole region that urgently needs to be tended to."

Libya to offer proposals on Pan Am case to U.S.

DAKAR (R) — Libya said Tuesday it would send the United States proposals for resolving a crisis over accusations that its agents blew up a Pan Am airliner in 1988.

Libyan Foreign Minister Ibrahim Mohammad Beshari said a letter would be passed to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker through the Belgian ambassador in Tripoli. Libya and the United States do not have diplomatic relations.

"It will propose some solutions to him," Mr. Beshari, in Dakar for an Islamic summit meeting, told Reuters. He declined to outline the proposals, saying he was still drafting the message.

So far Libya has resisted U.S. and British demands to extradite its two agents suspected of the airliner bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, in which 270 people were killed.

The United States and Britain have threatened to retaliate against Libya if it fails to hand over the suspects for trial.

Tripoli has denied any involvement and ruled out extraditing them for trial in the West. A Libyan judge is questioning the two agents. He said they would face the death penalty if convicted.

Earlier, Libya denounced the European Community (EC) Tuesday for supporting the United States and Britain.

The White House has rejected Libya's probe of the two Libyans accused of bombing the Pan Am airliner, saying the suspects should face U.S. justice.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said the United States was not satisfied that a Libyan judge was investigating the charges and said he had put both men under house arrest.

"We believe that our criminal justice system needs to proceed as is indicated, and we believe they should be brought here for prosecution," Mr. Fitzwater said.

"We have an independent judicial process underway with regard to the Libyan perpetrators of that act, and we intend to follow that through," he said.

French case

A Libyan judge said in Tripoli Tuesday he was questioning a brother-in-law of Muammar Qadhafi and another official wanted by France over the 1989 bombing of a French airliner which killed 170 people.

Supreme Court Judge Mamoud Ahmad Morsi named the two as Ahmad Senoussi and Moussa Koussa.

Mr. Senoussi is the brother-in-law of Libyan leader, Mr. Koussa is an official in the foreign affairs ministry.

Jordan rejects unilateral Israeli move to set up direct dialling system

By P.V. Vivekanand
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan said Tuesday it had not agreed to an Israeli move to open direct telephone lines to the Kingdom and said it had given instructions to international communication organisations not to channel any calls originating in Israel to Jordan and vice-versa.

"This is international piracy and violation of all international laws and regulations," said Communications Minister Jamal Sarayreh.

Noting that establishing direct dialling system between two countries needed the agreement of both parties, the minister told the Jordan Times that "we have not agreed to any such arrangement."

"It is an Israeli move to harass us," he said.

"We have instructed the concerned international communication organisations not to clear any telephone calls originating in Israel to Jordan or vice-versa," he added.

Technical experts said there was no way any country-to-country call could be routed to its destination without technical arrangements and the explicit permission of the targeted country and therefore the Israeli move was unilateral.

An Israeli announcement, made late Sunday, said the Israeli ministry of communications would make available direct dialling systems to 11 Arab countries: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Lebanon, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Jordan.

There was no immediate Israeli explanation to why Syria was pointedly missing from the list. Syria is among the Arab parties engaged in bilateral peace negotiations with Israel under the sponsorship of the United States and the Soviet Union.

The announcement, obviously timed to coincide with the resumption of the bilateral peace talks in Washington Tuesday, said

the arrangement would be available as of Dec. 17.

"I have no doubt that this step will demonstrate that Israel is ready to and prepared for peace," was the telling statement made by a spokesman for the Israeli ministry.

The Israeli move appeared to add credence to arguments that the Jewish state was primarily interested in normalising relations with the Arab states without necessarily reaching an equitable solution to the core of the conflict, the Palestinian problem.

"Obviously Israel is hoping to stage a public-relations stunt by making such an unilateral move without any significant progress in the peace talks," said a senior official in Amman.

The existing technical state-of-war between Israel and the Arab countries except Egypt precludes any normalisation of relations prior to arriving at a "comprehensive solution which addresses all dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict," added the



Jamal Sarayreh

official.

One of the Israeli arguments presented through the media is that direct dialling would be highly beneficial to the Palestinians living in the occupied territories as well as Israeli Arabs who may have family or business links with Arab countries.

A private company, Solan Communications, in handling indirect calls to and from Arab countries and Israel as well as the occupied territories. The calls are channelled through the company's London computers.

Solan's owner, Yaakov Solan, was quoted as saying by the Associated Press that he did not mind his service "competed in the interest of peace," but that the unilateral Israeli move violated international communication agreements.

Maxwell 'had links with KGB' — author

LONDON (AP) — Robert Maxwell had links with the Soviet intelligence agency the KGB dating back to the end of the World War II, according to the author of an unofficial biography of the late publishing tycoon.

Author Tom Bower said Mr. Maxwell gave a written undertaking to provide assistance when the KGB might require it while a serving officer in the British army of occupation in Berlin after the collapse on Nazi Germany.

Mr. Bower told the Associated Press in a telephone interview his allegations were based on recent contacts in the Soviet Union with sources in the KGB and Soviet military intelligence, the GRU.

In an extract from the book published in the Sunday Times, Mr. Bower emphasised that Mr. Maxwell has never been accused of any disloyalty to Britain, his adopted country.

Mr. Bower said in his book, "Maxwell: The Outsider," to be republished Thursday, that the KGB called in Mr. Maxwell's promise in 1968. The publisher, then a Labour Party lawmaker making his fortune publishing scientific journals, had a private meeting with then KGB Chairman Yuri Andropov. Mr. Bower said.

Mr. Bower claims Mr. Maxwell was contacted in Moscow by one Zolman Levitsky, a GRU officer now retired who was acting for the KGB, who had commissioned him saying they "needed Maxwell's services."

According to Mr. Bower, Mr. Levitsky arranged a private meeting between Mr. Maxwell and Yuri Andropov, the future Soviet leader then head of the KGB.

Afterwards, according to Mr. Bower, Mr. Levitsky recalls a KGB official telling Mr. Maxwell: "Don't worry. We don't ask you to do anything trivial. It will be important."

Mr. Bower says in his book: "The results of the meeting with Andropov are contained in Maxwell's KGB file," to which only the most senior KGB officials and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev would have access.

He adds that while there is no suggestion Mr. Maxwell betrayed Britain, he was "the archetypal opportunist and would have seen the advantages of performing a service that was not illegal."

Mr. Bower first published his biography of Mr. Maxwell in 1988, but Mr. Maxwell prevented widespread publication through a series of libel suits and buying a company which proposed to publish it.

The claims about Mr. Maxwell's KGB links have not been published before.

Mr. Bower said Mr. Maxwell's first contact with the KGB came in Berlin in 1946, while he was a British representative in the Soviet sector of occupied Berlin.

"At one stage during his posting, either willingly or unwillingly, Maxwell apparently compromised himself with the Russians."

"The KGB claims that he signed a document promising to assist it if required," Mr. Bower said.

Barzani threatens force to police Iraq's restive north

SALAHUDDIN, Iraq (R) — Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani is threatening to use his guerrilla army to maintain law and order in Iraq's restive north, Kurdistan.

Peshmarga (Soldiers of Death) guerrillas are locked in a standoff with Iraqi troops in the mountainous region.

Tension remains between the two sides after Baghdad's tanked forces crushed a Kurdish rebellion in the wake of the Gulf war last February.

Mr. Barzani says he is prepared to use his Kurdish fighters as a police force, even if it means confronting rival political factions.

Civilians and government employees in northern Iraq have complained of harassment and intimidation by armed Kurds for months. Car theft, kidnapping and political assassination have become commonplace in Kurdish cities.

Kurds say many incidents are the work of outlaws. But some say government employees, especially those suspected of association with Iraqi intelligence agencies, have been hounded in an organised manner.

Mr. Barzani, who heads the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), is scheduled to meet the Kurdistan Front, an alliance of eight political parties backed by guerrilla forces, on Wednesday.

He will propose that the front guarantee the safety of Iraqi government civil servants in exchange for an end to Baghdad's six-week economic blockade of the region.

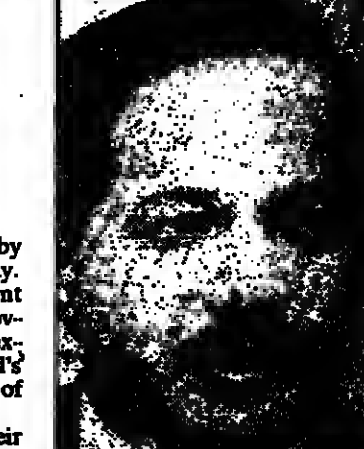
"If the front guarantees their (government employees') safety and one of the other parties violates the agreement, we will make our position very clear to them," Mr. Barzani told Reuters in a weekend interview.

His tightly-veiled threat to use force against rival factions could exacerbate already deep divisions within the Kurdistan Front.

Mr. Barzani is locked in a power struggle with his rival Jalal Talabani, who heads the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), for leadership of the Kurds in northern Iraq.

Mr. Talabani opposes a draft autonomy agreement Mr. Barzani brought back from Baghdad in mid-August, charging that it cedes Kurdish territory to Iraq without guaranteeing basic political or human rights for the Kurds.

In talks with Mr. Barzani last week, President Saddam Hussein cited doubts on the security of government personnel in Kurdistan as a reason for not lifting his



Massoud Barzani

economic blockade of the area.

Mahmoud Osman, head of the Kurdistan Socialist Party and a confidant of both men, thinks Mr. Barzani is mistaken to believe he can play policeman for all of Kurdistan.

"No-one can do what he (Mr. Barzani) wants to do," says Mr. Osman. "Anybody who exerts himself in this way will upset the balance of power here."

In an interview at his Salahuddin headquarters last month, Mr. Barzani said political pluralism in Kurdistan was leading to anarchy.

"I have the power to enforce discipline here," he said. "But if I use that power I will be accused of wanting to be a dictator."

The front ordered most guerrilla forces out of Kurdish cities in November but Kurds say Baghdad has not kept a promise to lift the blockade in exchange.

Anderson returns to U.S.

NEW YORK (AP) — Putting his brutal hostage ordeal behind him, Terry Anderson returned to the United States Tuesday, saying he will first get some much needed rest and then may write a book about his captivity in Lebanon.

The TWA jumbo jet carrying Mr. Anderson touched down at Kennedy airport at 1:54 p.m. (1854 GMT), after the eight-hour flight from Frankfurt, Germany.

"Welcome home to Terry," said TWA Captain Charles D. Swanson on the Boeing 747 loudspeaker as the plane roared into U.S. air space.

A round of applause went up on the crowded jet heading to New York. Mr. Anderson gave a "thumbs-up" sign, and smiled broadly.

During the flight, several passengers and crew members had approached Mr. Anderson to say how happy they were that he was free.

For Mr. Anderson, the sudden switch from dark, lonely cells to near-celebrity status is overwhelming.

"It's still a bit of a strain, facing all those people," the 44-year-old Associated Press correspondent said.

Earlier Tuesday, Mr. Anderson left the U.S. military hospital in Wiesbaden where he had rested and undergone medical tests after his kidnappers freed him from 6 1/2 years in captivity.

Mr. Anderson relaxed and read during the flight in the first-class section, and chatted with his six-year-old daughter, Solome. He had met the little girl for the first time in Damascus, where he was taken immediately after his release.

As Mr. Anderson's plane taxied to the terminal, fire trucks lining the tarmac shot water into the air to salute his arrival.

Shortly afterwards, Mr. Anderson was scheduled to face a throng of reporters at an airport news conference.

He was then heading to a hero's welcome at the Manhattan headquarters of the Associated Press. Mr. Anderson is the AP's chief Middle East correspondent.

IRNA: No quick freedom for Germans

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's official news agency Tuesday ruled out an early release of the last Western hostages held in Lebanon, German relief workers Thomas Kempster and Heinrich Struebig.

The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said the family of the Hamadi brothers jailed in Germany opposes an unconditional release of the German hostages.

Mr. Struebig, 50, and Mr. Kempster, 30, were kidnapped May 16, 1989, in South Lebanon while working for the German relief group ASME-Humanitas. They are believed held by Abdul Hadi Hamadi, security chief of the pro-Iranian Hizbollah, and the jailed Lebanese's third brother.

Hizbollah served as an umbrella for militants who kidnapped scores of Westerners in Lebanon in recent years.

"Informed sources told IRNA that the family of the Hamadi brothers ... is seriously opposed to current efforts to secure the release of the two Germans," the agency said in a dispatch from Beirut, monitored in Nicosia.

The Iranian media have generally been accurate in reporting on hostages held in Lebanon. However, IRNA last Wednesday reported the release of the last American hostage, Terry Anderson, eight hours before he was actually freed.

"The Hamadi family is against any leniency towards Germany prior to indications of good intentions from Bonn," IRNA said.

"According to the Hamadi family, the Germans have no good reputation in keeping their promises. In the past ... despite the good intention shown by the Lebanese Muslims in releasing other German hostages, the move was not reciprocated by the Germans in relation with the Hamadi brothers," the English-language dispatch said.

It was alluding to earlier releases of German captives abducted after the arrest of Mohammad Ali Hamadi at Frankfurt airport Jan. 13, 1987. In 1989, he was convicted and sentenced to life in prison for his role in the 1985 TWA hijack and the killing of an American passenger.

Abbas Hamadi was arrested on arrival in Germany on Jan. 26, 1987, and later sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment for kidnapping two German businessmen in Lebanon after the arrest of his brother.

IRNA said: "The Hamadi family is also unsatisfied with the mediators for not being serious in securing the release of their children," an indirect criticism of the United Nations' role.

U.N. envoy Giandomenico Picco, who negotiated the release of American and British hostages in recent months, was in Germany last week to discuss the Germans.

The Iranian newspaper Tehran Times cautioned in an editorial on Monday that convincing the Hamadi family to free their captives "is a lot more complicated" than was the case for those holding American and British hostages.

Algeria busts extremist group

ALGIERS (R) — Algerian forces have crushed a Muslim extremist gang blamed for a deadly raid on a border post in an operation some diplomats saw as warning fundamentalists not to try to sabotage this month's general election.

Tracked relentlessly across the southeastern desert region of Al Oued, where three frontier guards were killed last month, only a handful of the 34-strong band led by an extremist known as Tayeb the Afghan survived the manhunt.

Defence Minister Khaled Nezzar has hinted that the gang was linked to the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), the biggest opposition party which demands Algeria become an Islamic state.

The fiery deputy leader of the FIS, Ali Belhadj, is from the Al Oued area. On Monday 13 of the remaining 15 fugitives were killed in a clash near the southern town of Biskra, the home region of FIS President Abassi Madani.

Both Mr. Belhadj and Mr. Madani have been detained since street clashes last June between security forces and FIS militants demanding an Islamic state without a vote. That violence led to the postponement of Algeria's first multi-party election.

"They (the army) have not fooled around," one Western diplomat said on Tuesday. "I have my doubts the FIS ability to manoeuvre in future. It's certainly a tough warning."

The FIS denies involvement in the Nov. 29 attack near the Tunisian frontier. After shifting the throats of the three border guards, the gang made off with 21 semi-automatic rifles and more than two dozen pistols. The authorities say all but two guns have been recovered. There was no word on the fate of Tayeb the Afghan, so named for his frequent trips to Afghanistan.

There have been widespread fears of renewed violence in the run-up to the Dec. 26 election, which the FIS has threatened to boycott if its leaders are not freed. At least 55 people were killed in June's unrest.

One analyst said the destruction of Tayeb's gang and tough new laws on public demonstrations giving the government power to call in the army could influence FIS hardliners to agree their party should take part in the poll.

Six days after the election campaign officially started, the FIS's ruling council has still not given a decision. Diplomats say it is split between the hardliners, hoping to take advantage of social unrest caused by poverty, and pragmatists.

Last week, for the first time, the FIS backed down from a publicly announced position pitting it against the authorities.

FIS interim leader Ahnol Khader Hachani called mass marches — banned during the election period — to follow Friday prayers last week, but hours later cancelled them.

A Western diplomat said Mr. Hachani had been summoned to the interior ministry an hour after his statement and warned of a possible bloodbath if he went ahead.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Morocco's opposition challenges government

RABAT (R) — The Moroccan government and two main opposition parties were locked in a trial of strength Tuesday after strike calls by trade unions. A 24-hour pay strike by staff in the state education system was declared 90 per cent successful on Tuesday by a spokesman for the radical Democratic Labour Confederation (CDT). It was also backed by the General Union of Moroccan Workers (UGTM) but ignored by the kingdom's main trade union, the independent Moroccan Labour Union (UMT). Government officials denounced the strike as "useless, harmful and unpopular" and said first reports indicated that most of the country's 162,000 teachers and professors turned up for classes. The CDT, allied to the Socialist Union of People's Forces (USFP), and the UGTM, linked to the Nationalist Istiqlal Party, said the strike was decided after a failure of talks with the Education Ministry.

Iraq expels five from National Assembly

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's National Assembly has expelled five deputies on sabotage and treason accusations linked to regional revolts after the Gulf war. Four of the names listed in the Al Jumhuriyah newspaper, Tuesday were Muslim Shiite and the fifth Kurdish. They were believed to be the first representatives expelled since the 250-strong elected parliament was established 10 years ago. The daily's brief report did not indicate if further action was taken against the five. The government crushed riots in the Shiite south and Kurdish north shortly the Gulf war.

Comoros students free hostages at OIC

DAKAR (R) — Students from the Comoros Islands said Tuesday they had freed two visiting ministers and their country's ambassador to Senegal after holding them hostage for four days. The students at Dakar University timed their protest over non-payment of grants to coincide with the Islamic summit in Senegal. They first seized Ambassador Yaya Djimader last Friday at the Comoros consulate in Dakar and then took hostage two ministers who tried to negotiate the envoy's release. Foreign Minister Said Hassan said Mr. Hachim and Islamic Affairs Minister Ahmad Silihi were in the Comoros delegation for the Dec. 9-12 summit.

2 women held for hurling eggs at Rafsanjani

DAKAR (AP) — Two young women were led away by Senegalese security officers Tuesday after they hurled eggs towards Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani during a summit meeting of 45 Islamic countries. It was not immediately known if Mr. Rafsanjani was hit during the assault, which occurred in a hallway at the complex where the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) is holding its sixth summit. The four-day meeting opened Monday. The women who threw the eggs and called Mr. Rafsanjani a murderer were press badges that apparently enabled them to enter the venue. They also wore headscarves of the type common among Muslim women.

'Ethiopia tortured jailed U.N. officials'

GENEVA (R) — Two Ethiopian U.N. officials have been released from prison since last May's change of government in Addis Ababa, but both had been tortured and one is handicapped for life, a U.N. staff association said Tuesday. The officials, who worked for the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), spent nine years and two years respectively in jail, the Association for the Security and Independence of International Civil Servants said.

Settlers want to move to seized property

TEL AVIV (AP) — Jewish settlers appealed to the supreme court Tuesday to issue an interim order allowing them to move into homes in a neighbourhood that they tried to seize in Arab East Jerusalem last October.

The appeal followed a cabinet decision Sunday that said the settlers should be allowed to live in the homes, subject to attorney general Yosef Harish's approval of their legal rights to the properties.

Dan Aviyitzhak, lawyer for the settlers, said he asked the court to allow his clients to enter their homes in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Silwan immediately, without waiting for Mr. Harish's opinion expected by Dec. 16.

The settlers were removed by police as a security measure after they moved into at least six homes in the area, angering some Palestinians who said they were the legal owners of the properties. Some settlers were allowed by Israeli authorities to stay in one house while the legal question was decided.

The attempt to take over six houses in Silwan caused controversy at the time, coming just before a visit by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to try to arrange peace talks.

The settlers' appeal included a letter from Housing Minister Ariel Sharon declaring the settlers' claims to the buildings were legal, settler spokesman Igal Canaan said.

The letter "says all homes were bought legally through the Housing Ministry and that we have rented them legally," Mr. Canaan said.

Mr. Canaan says the group has plans to build more homes on property it has bought in the neighbourhood as well as to move into additional homes. Mr. Aviyitzhak has said the settlers own about 30 properties.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Le Monde et la Voie
18:05 News in French
19:15 Magazine
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Kate and allie
21:10 Cosmos
22:30 News in English
22:30 News and Order

PRAYER TIMES

06:54 Fajr
06:16 (Shrine) Dhuhr
11:26 Asr
16:36 Maghreb
17:58 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetish, Tel. 517140
Assistance of God Church, Tel. 632783
St. George Church Tel. 624390
Church of the Assumption Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

AMMAN: 4/10
Aqaba: 8/17
Jordan: 3/12
Jordan Valley: 9/16

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 11, Aqaba 18. Humidity readings: Amman 12 per cent, Aqaba 35 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Basim Qaddoumi 646024
Dr. Abdul Majed Sheri 791405
Dr. Ahmed Samir 732118
Dr. Abdul Aziz Tabane 78708
Firas pharmacy 661912
Fardous pharmacy 783336
Al Amana pharmacy 670255
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamoun pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Abu Baker (—)
Al Sham' pharmacy (273825)

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 893390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 893390
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 771013
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information 661171
(directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdullah Telephone Regalia 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111

HOSPITALS

Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 06-53200

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:00 Jeddah (RJ)
09:20 Doha (RJ)
09:30 Dhahran (RJ)
09:30 London (RJ)
09:30 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
10:30 Istanbul (RJ)
10:40 Madrid, Rome (RJ)
11:00 Paris, Geneva (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

11:00 Istanbul (RJ)
11:10 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:45 London (RJ)
12:15 Aqaba (RJ)
13:30 Colombo (RJ)
13:45 Cairo (RJ)
14:10 New Delhi (RJ)
14:10 Riyadh (RJ)
14:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
14:40 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
15:45 Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:30 Cairo (MS)
12:00 Sanaa (TV)
13:00 Benghazi (LN)
20:30 Karachi (PK)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in \$/kg per kg

Apple 600/500
Banana 500/450
Banana (Mukammal) 550/500
Beans 150/120
Cauliflower 220/170
Cucumber (large) 180/120
Cucumber (small) 350/320
Eggplant 280/220
Garlic 800/700
Grapes 900/800
Lemon 300/400
Lemon 180/120
Marrow (large) 160/120
Marrow (small) 330/300
Okra 850/750
Onion (dry) 770/120
Pepper (hot) 320/280
Pepper (sweet) 420/400
Potato 300/250
Sage 600/500
Spinach 220/180
Sweet melon 270/230
Tomatoes 620/560
Watermelon 160/120

18:15 London, Brussels (RJ)
18:15 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
21:45 Aqaba (RJ)

Iranian delegation visits Karak

AMMAN (Petra) — A visiting Iranian delegation headed by the deputy speaker of the Shura Council (national assembly) Tuesday visited Mutah University, where they were briefed by the University Vice President Abdul Rahman Attiyat on the university establishment and its development. He informed the delegation members that the university plans to establish two colleges, one for medicine and one for nursing, as well as a centre for mining.

Mr. Hashimyan, the deputy speaker, voiced pride in Jordanian universities, particularly Mutah University which has been named after the famous battle of Mutah and called on all Muslims to unite in the face of dangers facing them.

The delegation toured the university library, the computer centre, the engineering workshops and were briefed on these facilities. Mr. Hashimyan and the delegation accompanying him also visited Karak, where they were met by Karak Governor Eid Al Qatameh who briefed them on the governorate and the economic projects being carried out there. The delegation visited the Karak castle and the museum and were briefed on the historical importance of the sites. They also visited the tombs of Prophet Muhammad's companions who were buried in Mazar. The tombs house the remains of Jaafar Ibn Abi Taleh, Zeid Ben Haritha and Abdullah Ibn Rawaha.

The Iranian delegation arrived here Monday on a visit to Jordan for talks with Jordanian officials on issues of mutual concern.

Parliament committees elect heads

AMMAN (Petra) — The permanent and temporary committees of the Lower House of Parliament met Tuesday and elected their chairmen and rapporteurs. The financial committee elected deputy Abdullah Alkaleh as its chairman and deputy Matir Bustanji as rapporteur.

The legal committee elected deputy Hussein Mjalli as chairman and deputy Mohammad Abu Fares as rapporteur.

Deputy Husni Al Shawayb was elected chairman of the foreign affairs committee and deputy Issa Al Rimoni as its rapporteur, while deputy Ibrahim Khreisat was elected chairman of the public freedoms and citizens rights committee and deputy Salim Al Zubi as its rapporteur.

The agricultural committee elected deputy Nader Al Thubairat as chairman and deputy Awad Al Bashir as rapporteur. Deputy Ahmad Innab was elected chairman of the health and environmental safety committee and deputy Ziad Abu Mahfouz as its rapporteur.

Deputy Abdul Aziz Jaber was elected chairman of Palestine and the occupied Arab lands committee and deputy Nayef Al Hadid as its rapporteur. Mr. Hadid was also elected chairman of the countryside and the badia regions committee and deputy Abdul Hafiz Allawi was elected as its rapporteur.

The water strategy committee elected as chairman deputy Abdul Shreideh and as rapporteur deputy Fuad Khalafat.

Princess Sarvath tours social centres in north

MAFRAQ (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath, the honorary president of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) Tuesday met in Mafraq Municipality chapter of the JNRCS, and reviewed with Mafraq Governor Mahmoud Al Sari the social services in Mafraq. Mr. Sari lauded the role played by Princess Sarvath in supporting and developing social work.

The director of Raya Bini Al Hussein School in Mafraq reviewed the role the Red Crescent societies play in alleviating the

suffering of disaster-affected people and providing cash and in-kind contribution in the needy families.

Later, Princess Sarvath opened the new premises of the Mafraq branch of the JNRCS.

She also visited Al Noor Centre for chest diseases and inspected its various sections.

Princess Sarvath then visited the Irbid branch of the JNRCS and inspected progress of work.

She was also briefed on the services offered by the chapter. The Princess called on the soci-

ety in provide more in-kind assistance to the needy and to encourage poor families to set up income-generating projects. She urged the society to present new concepts and plans of action to develop the work with a view in serving a larger number of people.

Irbid Governor Fayed Abbadi reviewed the social services offered by the society in the governorate and highlighted the role of universities, public and private institutions in supporting social work.

Crown Prince looks at post cold war era, arena

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday said that the decade of the 90s has witnessed drastic changes in the fabric of international relations following the end of the cold war and the change of strategic thinking which was the basis for the conduct of the world countries and the military institutions.

Lecturing at the Royal Command and Staff College about the emerging new world order and prospects of peace, Prince Hassan asked whether the change in strategic thinking has been matched or coupled by a change in the world view to our region.

Prince Hassan said that such world view to our region should go beyond the traditional importance of this region which has the largest oil reserves. The Crown Prince added that the world still links the Middle East with oil to apply, within its context, the logic of cold war.

He pointed out that the world now views the threat to the Gulf oil coming from the Middle East itself, rather than from the Soviet Union, as it was viewing it before. This theory has led to the conclusion that the Middle East oil should be protected from the countries of the Middle East themselves.

The Crown Prince called on the countries of the region to use the art of communication in their endeavours to cope with the new changes and to focus on security in people rather than on countries or states.

He noted that the problems encountered by countries of the region, include the foreign debt, the population explosion, the scarcity of resources and the poor distribution of income.

He stressed that all were regional and not national problems, and as such should be addressed regionally.

Trade and industry magazines licensed; others await law

By P.V. Vivekanand

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Ministry of Information has issued licences for a few "specialised" trade and industry publications, but applications for newspapers and magazines of political and social nature have to wait until a new draft law on press and publications is endorsed by parliament and enacted, according to senior officials.

"We have licensed a few publications, which are specialised in certain fields" unrelated to politics or social affairs, Information Minister Mahmoud Sharif said. These licences are limited to specialised subjects such as the consumer market and children's magazines, he added.

"All other applications for any political or social publications have to wait until the new law is enacted," Mr. Sharif said.

He said the ministry had in file applications for over 150 monthly or weekly publications and "at least 15 for daily newspapers".

Sources in the publishing industry here said some of the new licences had been applied for years back, but Mr. Sharif said the issuance of permission in the last two months or so did not signal any shift in policy.

At least two of new licences are for magazines devoted for Jordanian and regional economy, and another for a fashion magazine, the sources said.

Most of the applications for newspaper licences are believed to have come from groups which function as de facto political parties awaiting the enactment of another draft law on legalisation of organised political activity.

The number of publications in Jordan is expected to go up dra-

matically as and when the draft press and publications law as well as the political parties law are approved by parliament and enacted by the government.

Both laws have been presented to the Lower House of Parliament, which is expected to start debate on the drafts immediately after discussions and approval with amendments if necessary. Of the 1992 fiscal budget, to be presented to the House Wednesday by Finance Minister Basel Jarrah.

The draft press and publications law — although not without its share of controversies — is aimed at overhauling the entire set-up for the publishing business in Jordan and enhancing "responsible press freedoms" as well as "the individual's right for protection against slander," according to officials. As and when enacted, the law is expected to widen the scope for existing publications and usher in new ones.

The draft law on political parties grants the right to every political group — which will be registered and legalised after the endorsement of the legislation — the right to publish new newspaper or magazine.

Mr. Sharif, in an informal meeting with foreign journalists Monday evening, noted that there is no censorship in Jordan, one of the few countries in the region where a free press has been allowed.

Under the regulations in force, no Jordanian newspaper or magazine is subject to censorship by the Ministry of Information but all foreign publications, including off-shore magazines and weeklies — those based in the free zone area — are scrutinised by ministry officials prior to allowing circulation in the Kingdom.

Unions demand special stores

AMMAN (Petra) — The Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions (FJLU) has demanded that Jordanian workers be allowed to have special stores like those of the civil servants and the armed forces where they can buy various commodities especially consumer products at reduced prices.

The request was presented to Supply Minister Mohammad Saqqa by the federation secretary-general Abdul Halim Khaddam during the minister's visit to the federation's headquarters.

Mr. Khaddam suggested that such stores for the workers be created by the federation in cooperation with the workers.

He said that the federation was willing to join hands with the Ministry of Supply in order to introduce and implement programmes designed to rationalise consumption in line with a policy adopted by the Ministry of Supply.

Mr. Saqqa discussed with the federation's executive council a number of supply topics, stressing the government's keenness to cooperate with various sectors of the public in supply-related affairs.

Mr. Saqqa reviewed the development of the supply ministry, its main objectives of providing goods to the public at reasonable prices and stabilising prices of all commodities on the market. He said that the ministry would continue to subsidise and sell through food coupons the following commodities: Rice, sugar, milk and flour. This process has proved beneficial for the country in general and limited income groups in particular, the minister noted.



Regent meets FAO (left), World Bank (right) officials

Labour, energy dominate discussions on economic restructuring programme

AMMAN (J.T.) — An official from the World Bank Tuesday discussed with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Thunayan Hindawi means of cooperation between the World Bank and the government of Jordan in areas related to the country's economic restructuring programme.

Mr. Fawzi Sultan, an executive director at the World Bank and responsible for the Arab World, reviewed with the Regent regional cooperation in the fields of labour and energy.

Both sides stressed the need for solving issues related to these two

matters from a regional perspective.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the two sides reviewed the World Bank's continued support for Jordan's efforts to carry out its economic restructuring programme.

Mr. Sultan stressed that the World Bank was continually urging industrial countries to extend all possible help to Jordan in order to enable the Kingdom deal with the economic and financial difficulties it has been facing lately.

Present at the meeting with the Regent were Finance Minister Basel Jarrah and Planning Minister Ziyad Fariz.

Dr. Fariz visited Washington earlier this month for talks with the World Bank on securing financial support for Jordan's balance of payments and to ensure financial assistance to the Kingdom's economic development.

Petra said the World Bank's assistance was also sought to support the Kingdom's current plans to implement the economic restructuring programme as agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker has stressed that the new government was totally committed to the implementation of this programme. Also in his speech

from the Throne, His Majesty King Hussein referred to the difficulties facing the national economy noting that the government would persist in dealing with the problems and would strive to reduce the deficit in the balance of payments.

The World Bank official was also received Tuesday Mr. Hindawi in the presence of Dr. Fariz. Discussion covered bilateral cooperation in financial and economic fields.

Petra said that the two sides discussed future plans to back the country's economic restructuring programme and help it overcome the present economic hardships.

Agricultural talks focus on expertise resources in Jordan and region

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, discussed with an official from the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) pertinent issues to boost regional cooperation and promote development in the Arab World.

Subjects related to trained and skilled personnel, financial and natural resources came up at the discussion between the Regent and Dr. Atef Bukhari, assistant FAO director who is here participating in a regional conference on

food production.

The two sides reviewed FAO's programmes for regional cooperation in agricultural fields and the role of FAO to help national programmes. The Regent stressed the need for regional cooperation in attaining the aspired goals.

The regional conference attended by delegates from 24 nations in the Near East region and which is due to end Thursday, is discussing topics and reviewing working papers covering

seeds, pesticides, pests affecting vegetables grown under plastic cover and diseases transmitted to man through animals, among other topics.

The conference was opened by Agriculture Minister Fayed Khasawneh, who said Jordan was maintaining close cooperation with regional and international organisations in agriculture-related fields to find solutions for its agricultural problems.

The minister told the opening

session of the five-day conference that the Kingdom was facing problems related to investments in agricultural projects, training of personnel, the lack of adequate quantities of seeds, pesticides and fertilisers.

Present at the meeting with the Regent were Dr. Khasawneh and Dr. Sami Sumaa, head of a liaison office jointly operated by FAO and ESCWA (the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia).

Jordanian-Australian agricultural project comes to an end

AMMAN (Petra) — A 10-year joint Jordanian-Australian project for exploiting dry land in Jordan has been completed. The three-phase project aimed at increasing agricultural production in dry land through planting fodder and developing methods of planting grains, and cereals.

The project also aimed at undertaking research and exten-

sion services to improve methods of growing wheat. The Australian government has contributed A \$1,572,000 towards the project in addition to the provision of extension services, equipment and agricultural items. The Jordanian government's contribution was in the form of in-kind assistance, as well as customs and administrative facilities.

Parliament's Upper House meets tomorrow

AMMAN (Petra) — The Upper House of Parliament will hold a session Thursday to elect members of the standing council for a term of two years. The standing council includes two deputies to the house speaker, and two assistants. The session which will be

chaired by its speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi and attended by cabinet ministers, will also elect members of the financial, legal, administrative and foreign affairs committees, as well as any other committees, which the house might opt to form.

امانة عمان الكبرى اعلان طرح عطاء ٩١ / ١

توريد اليات ومعدات صيانة الطرق

تعلن امانة عمان الكبرى عن رغبتها في طرح عطاء اليات ومعدات واجهزة صيانة الطرق لشغلا لتوريد لودرات مداحل، تركتورات، بركات، جهاز رشاش اسفلت، فريدة حصة كبيرة، اجهزة فحص، ونش على سيارة، فينشر صغير، والقام حمالية.

يمكن الحصول على وثائق العطاء للشركات ذات الاختصاص مقابل مبلغ ١٦٠ دينار غير مستردة عن كل نسخة وذلك من دائرة العطاءات في امانة عمان الكبرى مصطحبين معهم رخصة من سارية المفعول (صورة واصل) وذلك اعتبارا من ١٩٩١/١٢/١١ وعلى جميع المتقدمين الالتزام بتعبئة جدول الاسعار التفصيلي الموجود بوثيقة دعوة العطاء على الصفحة رقم ٣٩ كما هو مطلوب وكل عرض يرد مخالفا لهذا الشرط سوف يهمل ولا ينظر به.

آخر موعد لتقديم العروض هو الساعة العاشرة من صباح يوم الاثنين الموافق ١٩٩٢/١/٢٧ مرفق بتأمين مقداره ٥ % من قيمة العرض بموجب كفالة بنكية وكل عرض غير مرفق بالتأمين المطلوب يرفض ولا ينظر به. تفتح المظاريف بنفس اليوم الساعة الثانية عشرة ظهرا وبجلسة علنية.

Municipality of Greater Amman Amman Transport and Municipal Development Project (Loan No. 2334 - JO)

Road Maintenance Equipment and Instruments Tender IFB 1/91 The Municipality of Greater Amman intends to apply part of the proceeds of the above mentioned loan for the new issue of road maintenance equipment and instruments tender which includes the following: loaders, pneumatic rollers, tractors, pickup trucks, portable spray bar, portable chip spread, TRRL skid resistance pendulum, sandpatch, truck mounted crane, mini finisher and traffic cones.

Tender documents will be available as of December 11, 1991 for a non-refundable fee of (JD 160) one hundred sixty JD for each set from:

Municipality of Greater Amman Tenders Department P.O.Box 132 Amman - Jordan Tel: 21969 AMCITY JO Fax: 649420

Closing date for accepting the bids is 10:00 hours January 27, 1992, at the same address mentioned above.

A bank guarantee as a bid bond is a must for accepting the bids amounting to (5%) of the total bid value and all bidders must comply fully with page (39) of the tenders documents in order for their bids to be accepted. All bids will be opened publicly on the same closing date at 12:00 hours.

امانة عمان الكبرى اعلان اعادة طرح عطاء ٩٠ / ٢

توريد اليات ومعدات صيانة الطرق

تعلن امانة عمان الكبرى عن رغبتها باعادة طرح عطاء اليات ومعدات صيانة الطرق لشغلا لتوريد لودرات مداحل، تركتورات، بركات، جهاز رشاش اسفلت، فريدة حصة كبيرة، اجهزة فحص، ونش على سيارة، فينشر صغير، والقام حمالية.

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Municipality of Greater Amman Amman Transport and Municipal Development Project (Loan No. 2334 - JO)

Reissue of Road Maintenance Equipment Tender IFB 2/90 The Municipality of Greater Amman intends to apply part of the proceeds of the above mentioned loan for the reissue of road maintenance equipment tender which includes the following: water tanks, dump trucks small & large, vibratory rollers, road milling machine, fuel tank, concrete vibrators, mini loaders, cutting machines, mobile concrete mixer, backhoe loader, heater and sprayer, crack filling machine, melter pourer, road marking machine, bitumen distributor & tanker. Tender documents will be available as of December 11, 1991 for a non-refundable fee of (JD 160) one hundred sixty JD for each set from:

Municipality of Greater Amman Tenders Department P.O.Box 132 Amman - Jordan Tel: 21969 AMCITY JO Fax: 649420

Companies that participated in above mentioned tender can obtain the tender documents at no fee. Closing date for accepting the bids is 10:00 hours January 27, 1992, at the same address mentioned above.

A bank guarantee as a bid bond is a must for accepting the bids amounting to (5%) of the total bid value and all bidders must comply fully with page (39) of the tenders documents in order for their bids to be accepted. All bids will be opened publicly on the same closing date at 12:00 hours.

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

Jordan Times

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Economic Forum

Postponing not solving Jordan's debt problem

BELIEVE it or not, the International Monetary Fund (IMF)-sponsored economic adjustment programme does not embody a solution to Jordan's economic crisis although everybody assumes it does. It is rather a mechanism to postpone the real solution to that crisis. If everything goes according to the conceived schedule, it will take Jordan almost a quarter of a century to solve the core of the economic crisis which hit our economy hard in 1988. And, of course, the Jordanian economy will remain in the orbit of the IMF during that long period. Hereunder is an explanation.

Economic policies are formulated and executed to tackle economic disequilibria. On the macrolevel, the economy is in almost a permanent state of disequilibrium; equilibrium is a temporary or very short-lived state of affairs. Consequently, there always has to be an economic policy endeavouring to push the economy back into equilibrium.

Historically and traditionally, Jordan suffered from two almost chronic forms of disequilibrium, namely the trade deficit and the budget deficit. Our balance of payments, that is the basic balance, alternated from deficit to surplus, thanks to foreign aid (grants) which kept the current account in good shape most of the time

and thus led to the building of our gold and foreign exchange reserves which underwent corresponding ups and downs.

And Jordan managed to live with the trade and budget deficits which were there even during periods of economic booms and busts. It was only when the balance of payments (basic balance; deficit broke out to unmanageable limits that the Jordanian economy failed to tolerate the pressure. This happened in 1988-89 and took the form of inability to repay our external debt which fell due at that time. And this inability ballooned into the famous economic crisis. Since then the Jordanian economy has been hospitalised in the ward of the International Monetary Fund.

It follows that the successful remedying of our economic ills must include the healing of this external payments problem, that is repaying our external debt. This is the main premeditated task of the IMF-sponsored economic programme. Now let us look into that programme.

The major answer of the adjustment programme to this basic question was to reschedule our external debt, that is to defer repayments not to effect them. Repayment (net) of our foreign loans will not start in the 20th century. If everything goes fine,

there is a possibility (not a certainty) that Jordan will start retiring its external debt sometime during the next century. And during the remaining part of the nineties, Jordan will acquire more foreign loans under the patronage of the IMF. In other words, Jordan will be a net borrower from abroad as any debt repayments that may be made during the nineties will be financed from still more foreign loans. Thus the problem of external indebtedness which sparked our economic crisis is aggravated and postponed or shelved but not solved.

If everything goes smoothly, according to schedule (and to dreams), Jordan will possibly start repaying its external debt sometime towards the start of the next century. It will take about 15-20 more years to retire the whole debt and thus we will keep the company of the IMF for at least 25 years.

But what if everything does not go exactly according to the schedule?

Well, that is not a problem because a new generation of our economic policy managers shall have taken over at that time and they will have to answer this question and be accountable for the results.

Israeli tactics and U.S. responsibility

MANY ORDINARY Arabs are sceptical about Israel's real intentions at the ongoing peace process. And they, it seems, have all the right to be so. Since U.S. Secretary of State James Baker started the process in March, the Israelis have made sure to place one obstacle after another on the path of the process. By the time, the Middle East peace conference was convened in Madrid on Nov. 30, Israel had managed to leave its mark on every aspect of the process. The Israelis had insisted, and the Arabs subsequently agreed, that the talks run on two tracks, an Israeli-Palestinian track and an Arab-Israeli track. On Monday, however, on the eve of the much-delayed Washington talks, the Israelis protested to separate rooms for separate talks between Israelis and Palestinians and between Jordanians and Israelis at the U.S. State Department in Washington. This simply runs against the notion of the two-track approach to negotiations that the Israelis originally insisted on.

Not only that.

It took almost a week since Arab delegates arrived in Washington for the Israelis to agree on a new date for starting the talks. And once the wrangle over separate talks with Palestinians and Jordanians is solved the Israelis will want, as they have been saying, to talk about procedures: Where and when to hold the next round.

So what are the Israelis aiming at?

One, they are not in a hurry. The longer the peace process drags on the more Israeli settlements are erected in the occupied Arab territories. Delay will also take them to February, when President George Bush's moratorium on the Israeli request for the \$10 billion loan guarantees ends.

Two, the Israelis are betting on a new climate in the U.S. once the American presidential election campaign picks up in earnest. The Israelis, through their strong Jewish lobby in the U.S., hope for new positions by new candidates in the presidential race on world issues, including the Middle East conflict.

Three, the Israelis also bet on Arab frustrations with its tactics to play in its favour, especially if that led to infighting among the Arab ranks.

Four, the Israelis want to tread easily in a rapidly shifting world in order to ensure itself maximum benefits from the new changes and the advancing new world order.

But the Arabs, for the same reasons as Israel, cannot afford the delay. They know that every passing day is changing reality on ground in the occupied territories. They also need funds to reform their economies, but they know such funds will only come with peace. The Arabs also want tangible results from the process to help them avert and discontent from their constituencies.

That is why it has become imperative that the Arabs should change tactics by placing as much pressure as possible on the Israelis in order to speed the process and achieve early results. Pressure on the Israelis can unfortunately be applied only through the U.S. The latter must always be reminded by its commitment to international legitimacy and to peace and stability in the region and security for all. Unless the U.S. assumed full responsibility for convincing Israel to stop tactics and move ahead on the path of peace, very little could be achieved and a last chance could be missed.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

MYSTERY shrouds the Washington Middle East peace talks starting Tuesday largely due to Israel's intransigent position and its determination to lay obstacles in the path of a settlement, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Tuesday. Unlike the atmosphere prevailing at the Madrid opening a negotiations, the Washington setting is regarded with a great measure of suspicion as to what it could achieve for the cause of peace, the paper said. As the Arabs are clearly aiming to attain a comprehensive and lasting peace, the Israelis are showing continued obstinacy and their intention was explicit in a speech by their Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in Madrid in which he averted mentioning the substantial issues of the talks and dwelt on Israel's interests alone, the paper pointed out. It said the best description for the Israeli leadership's attitude can be found in a statement by former Israeli Minister Ezer Weizman in an Israeli daily in which he stated that the present policies of the Israeli government can never lead to the aspired peace but rather could end up in war with the Arabs. The paper said Jordan and the rest of the Arab parties are taking extra care to deal with all developments with wisdom and with a great deal of awareness and a spirit of openness, but such keenness on reaching a settlement can by no means indicate that the Arabs can accept peace at any price. However, the Arab parties are called on to achieve the highest level of coordination in Washington so that they can attain the best results, the paper said. The paper also said that the world community has a serious responsibility to help the Arabs regain their legitimate rights and end Israel's occupation of Arab land.

A COLUMNIST in Sawt Al Shabab daily Tuesday discussed the increase in the crimes rates committed in Jordan last month by 51 per cent over those reported in November of 1990. The figures are appalling and they indicate that Jordan, long known for its community of good and conscientious people, is witnessing a slide towards evil, said Ahmad Dabbas. The writer said that there is no doubt that unemployment, deprivation and poverty lie behind most of these crimes and the time has come to urge the responsible authorities and the concerned institutions to take speedy action to help stop such steep decline towards the abyss of evil by tackling their underlying causes. The security services and the police are of course responsible for providing protection for the public and people's property and for chasing criminals and arresting thieves and robbers, he said. But he stressed that the problem of crime should be regarded as the responsibility of the whole community and all citizens should feel responsible one way or another in helping the concerned authorities deal with the situation by reporting criminals or through setting good examples to others in all matters and all the time. He said that expressing regret over the rise in the number of crimes can by no means help solve the problem which is the responsibility of the whole community.

Following is an address delivered by Dr. Abdul Salam Majali, head of the Jordanian delegation at the peace talks, at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy on Dec. 9. The address was made available to the Jordan Times by the Jordan Media Group.

It is my great pleasure to address this distinguished gathering at the generous and appreciated invitation of Mr. Barbi Weinberg, president of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, and its director, Mr. Martin Indyk. So, please accept my warmest thanks.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Arab-Israeli conflict and its core, the Palestinian problem, often characterised as intractable, may be less so today than at any time before.

The intensive, sustained and substantive efforts of President George Bush and Secretary Baker, with unprecedented cooperation by the Soviet leadership, have launched a process which enabled Arabs and Israelis to overcome what each side considered before as unresolvable procedural matters standing in the way of a serious and constructive dialogue to achieve peace.

The international peace conference held in Madrid on Oct. 30, 1991, marked a watershed in the history of our troubled region; our presence here today marks another. It is the hope of Jordan that all parties to this process will continue down the long and difficult path to peace, in the spirit of open exchange and communication. The fact that we have reached this crucial stage owes much to that spirit, and it is a credit to all concerned that we are finally on the road to the just and lasting settlement that promises peace, security and mutual enrichment to all the peoples of the Middle East alike.

However, what is rightly characterised as a breakthrough by the convocation of the Madrid Middle East peace conference held from Oct. 30 to Nov. 3, 1991, for Jordan is a delayed occurrence of what it has been calling and working for many years.

It has always been Jordan's aim to help bring about a peaceful and equitable resolution to the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Jordan, working within the framework of the U.N. Charter and seeking always to uphold the provisions of international law, has attempted to lay the foundations for many peace initiatives. In so doing, it has coordinated and cooperated with other Arab states, the Palestinians, and the international community at large. Now, for the first time, our efforts are nearing fruition, for these conflicts are being seriously addressed within the framework of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. These resolutions, the embodiment of the will of the international community, provide the groundwork for a sound formula for ending the conflict in our region. They call for the exchange of the occupied territories for peace, while safeguarding the security of all states in the region. Israel included. We are greatly heartened by the progress that is being made towards these objectives.

It was also heartening to note President Bush's call, in his congressional address of March 6, 1991, for the legitimate political rights of the Palestinians in their own homeland to be a major item for the agenda of the peace conference. At last, the Palestinian national struggle for identity has been rewarded. It has taken decades, but Palestinians are now the masters of their own destiny. In the interest of reaching a resolution to this conflict which

underpins all regional confrontations, Jordan has always demonstrated flexibility as to the modalities and format of peace talks. We welcomed the inclusion of the Palestinians, and willingly provided an umbrella for their participation—the joint delegation—for it has always been our contention that there can be no meaningful talk of peace without Palestinian representation. Jordan intends to support and assist them in every possible way in their quest for the inalienable right to national self-determination.

Jordan has also accepted a two-track approach to the negotiations which Israel itself has insisted upon: A Palestinian-Israeli track, and an Arab-Israeli track. We firmly believe that the former track should be pursued by the Palestinians themselves. While Jordan will support the Palestinians, coordinate issues and discuss with them matters that will affect any future arrangement, it must be made crystal clear that Jordan will not negotiate on behalf of the Palestinians. We believe it is in the interest of all parties, and certainly that of Israel, that any peace settlement of the Palestinian dimension of the conflict should be negotiated and accepted by the Palestinians themselves if we were to achieve a durable and lasting peace.

At the Madrid conference, all parties indicated both their willingness to continue negotiations, and their commitment to the ultimate objective: a just and secure peace for all. But the path is likely to be as difficult as it will be long, and if we are to reach that objective, certain factors must be borne in mind.

From the co-sponsors of the talks, skilful mediation is a requirement, and sensitive, pragmatic use of the influence available to them will be needed

to bridge the gulf that separates the parties on fundamental issues of substance. Israel, for its part, must accept the cardinal principles of international law that the acquisition of territory by war is inadmissible.

It must also implement measures to build public confidence on both sides. The most urgent and central of these is a freeze on settlement construction in the occupied territories. Such a freeze would be a mark of good faith and a valuable contribution towards the breakdown of psychological barriers that exist for both parties. Indeed, all parties must refrain from actions which may undermine the continuation of the process. This opportunity has been nearly half a century coming; we believe that none of the parties wish to wait so long for another opportunity, and that they will, therefore, act only in our common best interests.

Israeli settlements in the occupied territories do not only violate international law, but underline the primacy of war as an instrument of Israeli foreign policy. Jewish acquisition of land in Palestine has served as the basic vehicle for nation-building. Moreover, the question of settlements has repercussions beyond the occupied territories. It impinges directly on Jordan's national security, and the social, economic and environmental interests of our population. Jordan is a country of limited resources, and the constant drain on its meagre water supplies threatens agriculture, industry, and the domestic structures of the populations on both sides of the Jordan River. Israeli water consumption in the occupied West Bank is, according to the latest statistics, nine times greater than that of the indigenous Arab population. We, in Jordan, believe that peace is more than the

absence of war. It is the establishment and perpetuation of conditions of stability, security and universal respect for the rights of people and states. We can see little hope for peace, so defined, unless breakthroughs are made on three fundamental issues.

In this context, the emotive problem of Jerusalem must also be addressed. The irony of the situation is that the holy city is the symbol and essence of peace in the region; it could so easily serve as a model and inspiration to all of the world's troubled regions, a spiritual and pragmatic blueprint for conflict resolution. The reverence accorded Jerusalem by the three Abrahamic faiths places it in a position beyond political exigency; its exemplary value is too high. Peace can never be ensured unless the supremacy and legitimacy of international law are seen to be upheld and enforced. The international community has always recognised Arab Jerusalem as an integral part of the territories occupied by Israel in 1967. We therefore, put it to you that, given the very nature of the city, Arab sovereignty over East Jerusalem must be restored. Freedom of access to the religious shrines for worshippers of all faiths will of course be respected and guaranteed, and Jerusalem can once again serve as a shining example to the rest of the world of what can be achieved when true peace is the objective of nations.

It is for all these reasons that Jordan regards multilateral negotiations on regional issues to be of crucial importance. These issues are by their very nature transnational, and must be addressed collectively, not only by regional players, but by the world at large. The region will never know true peace unless the prevailing disparities are eliminated. We see the problems of the regions as

fundamentally interrelated, and we view a cooperative global framework for the resolution of our interconnected regional crises as the only approach likely to succeed.

In the past, questions of demography, resources and ideology have been addressed almost exclusively through the dimension of military security. We look towards the economic and political dimensions as more likely to yield lasting resolutions satisfactory to all. For example, rather than settling border disputes through military means, we advocate peaceful negotiations whereby border disputes taken into account transactional issues and try to solve them accordingly. In essence, our vision is of a Middle Eastern Helsinki process, a conference on security and cooperation in the Middle East. We believe that this must serve as the foundation for national security, political stability and the introduction of democratic institutions and practices. The participation of states with a similar experience in conflict resolutions is of course imperative to assist the countries of the Middle East in overcoming their difficulties.

Jordan believes in the need for joint answers to the challenges of the Middle East, answers based on true peace-making. Jean Monnet, the primary architect of the European integration, contrasted two different models of negotiation. In the conventional model, the two sides face each other across a negotiating table. In the true peace-making process, however, all parties are on the same side, facing together their common challenge on the other side of the table. It is our hope that this peace process will be characterised not by the first, but by the second way of peace-making; for nothing less than that will produce real and lasting solutions to our common challenges.

Israeli refusal threatens bilaterals

(Continued from page 1)

The Palestinians and Jordanians insist that the two delegations sit in separate rooms in order to discuss their own respective agendas and to protect against any ambiguity over which party is negotiating on behalf of the Palestinians.

"This is not a matter of procedure, it is of essential substance," said Dr. Musaher. "The Palestinians are a people and cannot be treated as a sub-committee... we are not going to negotiate on their behalf and we have no authority to negotiate on behalf of Palestinians. It is a matter of principle and a matter of jurisdiction."

But the spokesman said that talks with Israeli chief delegate Elyakim Rubinstein have not reached an "impasse" yet and that both sides would confer with their respective governments before returning to the State Department later this afternoon.

Dr. Musaher said that Abdul Salam Majali and Dr. Heider Abdul Shaif, the heads of the Jordanian and Palestinian delegations respectively, put several suggestions and ideas on the table to resolve the issue but Mr. Rubinstein told them he could not commit himself to a decision.

One of the suggestions made was that the joint delegation would enter one room at the official negotiating site as a single team but have the issue of separation "immediately on the agenda," said Dr. Musaher, adding that no other topic would be discussed until the issue is resolved.

Mr. Rubinstein said upon leaving the State Department after the three-hour meeting that the talks centred on how to continue and that the Israelis were ready to "move from the corridors into substance." But he refused to answer questions on why they would not meet with Palestinians separately.

State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said the United

States was "delighted that these talks resumed here today in Washington in the State Department complex at three separate sites."

She said she was aware of the problem between the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation but that it was up to the delegations to resolve their differences by themselves.

But Jordanian and Palestinian delegates said that they will resort to the co-sponsors of the process if a deadlock is reached.

Arab delegates were split on the opinion whether the Israeli delegation had a mandate from its government to negotiate with the Palestinians separately. According to informed sources, the head of the Israeli delegation is insisting that he has no such mandate and that his prime minister would have to be consulted on the matter and has to approve the step if his team is to go ahead with the separate negotiations.

There are reports from the Israeli side that at least Mr. Rubinstein and leaders of other Israeli delegations will be leaving for Israel Thursday or Friday. But it was not immediately confirmed whether he will actually go, and if so whether his trip would be for consultations or for good.

The Israelis had been opposed to Washington as venue for the talks, although it is reported that they have finally decided to come here and strive to achieve real progress before they ask for another venue or move the talks to the region once and for all.

Asked about any Israeli plans to leave, the State Department spokeswoman said yesterday: "It's up to it's up to the Israeli delegation to determine. I'd refer you to them."

George Hawatmeh, Nermeen Murad and Ghader Taher contributed to this story.

U.S. experts doubt Israel can repay

(Continued from page 1)

services for a flood of new immigrants from the Soviet Union.

Israeli officials argue that the new immigration would result in economic growth but the CRS report said absorbing the newcomers required flexibility that so far eluded the economy.

In briefing papers distributed to U.S. lawmakers, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the most powerful pro-Israel lobby in the United States, asserts that Israel has a "perfect record" in repaying loans.

But the CRS disagrees. "According to U.S. treasury data, Israel's payments record to the U.S. government has not been entirely flawless," its report said.

"In each of the six years under

consideration (1985 to 1990), a portion of debt owed by the Israeli government was 90 days or more overdue at the end of the year."

Even now, most of the economic aid the United States grants Israel is used to repay debts to the United States, whose economic assistance accounts for a full 10 per cent of the Israeli economy.

Since its establishment, the Jewish state has received \$53 billion in U.S. aid and assistance has been running at around \$3 billion per year since the mid-1980s.

The Exim Bank analysis predicted that sharply increased lending could, by the end of the decade, land the United States "in a position where the scheduled repayments exceed disbursements."

Palestinians under curfew

(Continued from page 1)

settlements in the occupied lands. It gave no details.

The United States on Monday warned Israel against such a step, fearing it might derail the talks resuming in Washington after an Israeli boycott last week.

In another development, an army spokesman confirmed news reports that soldiers stripped 20 Palestinians to the waist and forced them to stand for 40 minutes in the cold while they searched them.

The incident Monday night in the occupied West Bank town of

Beit Iksa "was out of the ordinary and against orders" the spokesman said.

A Palestinian taxi driver said on Tuesday he and about 200 Arabs were detained for 26 hours last week for curfew-breaking. They were forced to stand in pouring rain for the first 12 hours.

Israeli troops who in the past turned a blind eye to Arabs visiting neighbours during curfews were apparently under orders to fully enforce the latest restrictions. Palestinians said a 32-year-old man trying to pay such a visit was grabbed by soldiers as soon as he stepped out of his house Monday.

King addresses Islamic conference

(Continued from page 1)

Islamic countries.

In the wide-ranging address, the King outlined Jordan's position in the Middle East peace process as well as other regional and international events and developments (see full text of address on page 5).

On the fringes of the summit, the King continued bilateral consultations with other Islamic leaders attending the gathering. Among the leaders he met were the Sultan of Brunei, Yemeni Vice-President Saleem Ali Al Beedh, President Omar Bongo of Gabon and Guinea Bissau President Joao Bernardo Vieira.

The King also met with Senegalese President Abdou Diouf—the summit host—and conferred upon him the Al Qiladeh Al Hashmiyeh Medal in appreciation of his efforts in convening the summit and his role in its workings.

The King also held talks with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and discussed the Middle East peace process and Jordanian-Palestinian coordination.

The meetings were attended by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the King's Military Secretary Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, Foreign Minister Kamel Abn Jaber and Jordan's

Ambassador to Senegal Adnan Al Talhomni.

Meanwhile, the OIC summit has drafted a resolution calling for the continued imposition of international sanctions against Iraq, which is not attending the conference, and demanded that Baghdad comply with all United Nations resolutions pertinent to the Gulf crisis, triggered by the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Iran told the summit that direct peace talks between Arabs and Israel were fruitless and called for a holy war to free Palestinian territory.

Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the first Iranian president to attend an Islamic summit since Iran's Islamic revolution in 1979, declared: "How can one be hopeful of the results of negotiation with such a hostile regime?"

The Iranian delegation handed out English texts of the 30-page speech bound in a hardback book, further evidence of Iran's high-profile approach to the summit as it tries to emerge from years of international isolation.

"The continuation of multifaceted jihad (holy war), strengthening intifada and continuous struggles are the only ways to regain the rights of the oppressed people of Palestine," Mr. Rafsanjani declared.

Mr. Rafsanjani also attacked the involvement of outside powers in the defence of the Gulf.

Respect for human rights, democracy, cooperation are essential for Islamic renaissance

The following is the text of His Majesty King Hussein's address to the sixth summit of the Organisation of Islamic Conference delivered in Dakar, Senegal yesterday.

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

"Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity. Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into dissensions after receiving clear signs: for them is a dreadful penalty."

Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds, and May God's Peace and Blessings be on Our Master, Mohammad, the Best of Apostles, and on His Descendants and Companions without Exception

Your Excellency, Chairman of the Conference, Your Majesty, Excellencies, and Highnesses, Brothers,

As-salamu Alaykum wa Rahmatu 'ilahi wa Barakatuhu! And may God bless you, meeting as you are in this brotherly country, united by a common faith and by inseparable ties of love, and having as your aim the best interests of the Muslim umma. Let us pray that this meeting will, with the help of God Almighty, deepen our sense of mutual trust, strengthen our solidarity and create the proper conditions for improving the state of the umma, so that it may forge ahead on the road of progress, regain its past glory, and actualise its great potentialities. We will carry back to our peoples such principles of thought and action as will enable them to respond adequately to the challenges brought about by the changing times to the entire world in the fields of politics, economics, science, culture, development, and administration — principles that can help create a new humanitarian trend that is capable of conveying to the world the great experience of Islam in high morals, freedom, justice and democracy so that the world may replace despair with hope, doubts with certainty, and inequity with justice, in accordance with the principles of right, freedom, and equality.

It gives me great pleasure, as I speak to you on behalf of the delegation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, to extend to my brother, His Excellency the Chairman of the Conference, my congratulations for the confidence accorded to him by our conference, and to express my deepest regards for His Excellency, who, I am sure, will spare no efforts to enable it to attain its aims. I am also happy to be able to express my deep appreciation and that of the Jordanian delegation for the hospitality and care extended to us as soon as we set foot on the soil of his noble country and met his dear brotherly people.

The convening of the Islamic conference, south of the Sahara for the first time, particularly on this dear part of the Black Continent, deeply meaning in the history of suffering and hope, is a great event both in value and meaning. This becomes more significant as the world is being ushered into a new era, where our Islamic nation should not be marginalised. I believe that the age of hegemony among Muslims, which we have unsuccessfully sought for decades, seems now to be flowing towards us from the African faces beaming with purity, patience and sincerity. These African attributes that have not been tainted or uprooted from their virgin land.

Let me also use this opportunity to express my appreciation for the efforts exerted by His Highness the Emir of Kuwait during his Chairmanship of the Fifth Islamic Conference. I would also like to seize this opportunity to salute and congratulate the Islamic Republic of Azerbaijan for joining the OIC, and my congratulations are extended as well to the Republic of Albania on gaining an observer status in our Islamic Organisation.

Your Excellency, Brothers,

The umma is now on the threshold of profound changes, as is the case with the rest of the world, and it is suffering from wounds that you all know only too well. We must all look for the cure that can heal these wounds and stop the bleeding that is sapping its energy and depleting its resources. It cannot be found except through reason. Only through constructive scientific thinking, deep-rooted methodology, and careful analysis of the present and the future in the light of a truly Islamic outlook will we be able to have, in an age of global cooperation and interdependence, a new understanding that is neither too extreme nor narrow-minded of the causes of unrest and backwardness, and to identify the dimensions of the present situation properly, unhampered by the modes of traditional thinking that limit the mind, curb creativity, and stand in the face of any hopes for the future.

In preparing ourselves for the future and for the hoped-for renaissance of the umma, it will be essential for us to arm ourselves with the highest degree of awareness, creativity, and careful planning. A new generation of scholars must be raised to teach the people the values of righteousness and justice and to lead them along the path of goodness in an atmosphere of tolerance and forbearance so that none amongst us will continue to complain of thirst, hunger, or misery. These scholars should write the common history of the Muslims and highlight the wonderful contributions of the Islamic nation in order that they may be a source of pride and inspiration for the future generations. Advanced research centres should also be established in their present academic institutions, whose task would be to analyse the causes of weakness and backwardness and to study the prerequisites of progress and renewal. When they do so, they will find in the essence of the message of Islam such perfect truth, absolute certainty, and pure good that they will end up with the happy mixture of reason and piety, enabling them to lead the people in their daily transactions without tensions or contradictions and pave the way for them to explore the roads of modern scientific endeavour in a world in which there is no place for the isolated, but which opens all the roads for the true believers, be they leaders, the people, or scientists, to live in harmony and to establish beacons of justice, knowledge, and tolerance among the members of each nation on the one hand, and between them and the people of other nations on the other.

Your Excellency, Brothers,

The Organisation of Islamic Conference did not come into existence as a result of the East-West conflict during the cold war era. Still, it is not oblivious of the international interaction that reflects the nature of the world order, the realities of world powers, and their delicate balances. The leaders of the umma convened in their first summit conference in response to the ungodly attack against the Al Aqsa Mosque perpetrated in August 1969. Due to the awareness of the importance of cooperation, solidarity, and cohesion among our peoples, the meetings continued and their horizons expanded so that Islamic activities were initiated in more than one area as is the case with our periodic meetings and with the subsidiary organs and institutions established in the fields of economics, culture, information, and science and technology.

If we were to measure the success of our organisation in the light of what has been achieved so far, we would have to admit that we are still at the beginning of the road to cooperation and coordination among our states and peoples. It is useless to talk about the international variables that have occurred or about the inadequacy of our efforts to be an effective part of what has happened — unless, that is, we accept the challenges we are faced with to see what we can do to bring about clear-cut of the process of change. Initially, we have to draw for ourselves clear-cut to occupy on the map of world politics. In order to do so, we must have a careful look at ourselves, bearing in mind the following words of the Almighty: "Because Allah will never change the Grace which He hath bestowed on a people until they change what is in their (own) souls; and verily Allah is He who heareth and knoweth (all things)."

Your Excellency, Brothers,

The changes currently taking place in the international arena are bound to leave their mark on us. Our role and relative weight in this arena, however, can only be determined by our own potential. With such potential in knowledge, manpower, and natural resources we have enough to entitle us to play a distinguished role in the world today. Our faith, which is our mainstay, can guide us in the management of our internal affairs.

Since it is clear, as we study the immediate return, that our response to the challenge has not been as it should be, it is imperative on the leaders and scholars of the umma to ask the following basic question: What are the causes of this discrepancy between the enormous challenges and our modest responses? The answer may lie in a number of factors that can all be reduced to a single word: Knowledge. We should know our heritage and study it carefully; we should ourselves and our potential; we should know the world and the changes taking place in it. We should also know that the imbalance in the world order will continue in spite of the extensive changes and the far-reaching transformations that have occurred over the last two years and the consequent readjustments in East-West relations. The new world order is still operating with the old instruments; tensions between state and society continue to exist; disparity between the haves and have-nots is still apparent; selectivity regarding human rights, democracy, and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is still glaring. Besides, many states are no longer capable of providing the basic needs of the individuals, let alone dealing effectively with such global problems as the environment, drugs, natural disasters, and famine. Above all, there is a real danger that the Muslims might be described as enemies of progress and human rights as one can gather from certain pointers here and there.

You are aware, Ladies and Gentlemen, of the enormous challenges faced by our nations, foremost among which are the conflicts that exist among some of our states. If these conflicts continue (God forbid), they

will cause further hatreds among the members of this umma, which is still suffering from long decades of external aggression that appropriated its resources, divided its lands and still occupies parts of these lands. To face these conflicts, we must seek solutions ourselves, through our own organisations and institutions, and in the light of the rules of common Islamic action.

Your Excellency, Brothers,

Between the fifth session of our Islamic Conference and the present one, far-reaching international events have taken place. One of these was the Gulf crisis. Whatever the causes and consequences of the crisis, it was a true catastrophe that befell the umma. Its tragic effects were not limited to the Muslim people of Kuwait or the Muslim people of Iraq after they touched other Muslim nations as well, Jordan being one of them. I pray to God to guide us through the threshold of putting this catastrophe behind us and no longer view it as a nightmare that threatens present amity and determines our future course of action. Now that we are treating its wounds and trying to consider it as part of the past, may we take it as a symptom of our weakness and disunity? Can we begin, as our great religion and the traditions set by our Prophet demand, to shun the causes of disunity and conflict? The people of Kuwait have suffered and are still suffering from its adverse effects especially in the sphere of the environment. Likewise, the eighteen million people of Iraq suffered are still suffering from hunger, disease and deprivation. Thousands of Iraqi children die as a result of shortage of medicine and food. What have we done for their sake and for the sake of the children of this umma as we read the words of God Almighty: "And verily this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood. And I am your Lord and Cherisher: therefore fear Me and no other."

Brothers,

The sufferings of the people of Palestine under occupation and outside Palestine have reached a critical stage. Israel, which is supported materially, demographically, militarily and diplomatically by East and West alike, is persisting in its arbitrary illegal policies against the civilian population of Palestine. It has placed them in psychological and economic conditions beyond the endurance of humanity in order to dislodge them from their homeland and force them to emigrate. Meanwhile, new settlers are brought in for whom settlements are built on Palestinian lands. National Palestinian cultural and educational institutions are systematically destroyed, places of worship desecrated, historical documents confiscated. Neither Muslim nor Christian holy places are safe from Israeli aggression. Worshipers in the Al Aqsa Mosque have been massacred. The latest example of aggression was the confiscation last October of records belonging to the Islamic Waqf and the Islamic Court documenting the continuity of Muslim history in Jerusalem and embodying the Arab-Islamic nature of the city, and preserving its distinctive identity as a symbol of peaceful co-existence and openness in the light of Islamic teachings and the Omani "bay'a".

All of this has been happening while the Palestinians have been facing the cruelty of the occupation forces on a daily basis and suffering from the consequences of the Gulf catastrophe. Jordan, as you know, has also suffered severely from these consequences; approximately three hundred thousand people, or almost 10 per cent of the population of the country, returned in dire human conditions and at a time of scarcity in material as well as water resources in our country. And yet, thank God, the Jordanian people still hold fast to their belief in God and to the values of compassion, goodness and giving.

In the midst of this calamity, and soon after the Gulf war had come to a close, there appeared some hope that a solution for the Palestinian problem might be possible. Several factors were behind this, one of which was the end of the cold war and the determination of the two superpowers to cooperate instead of engaging in conflict and to settle conflicts through peaceful means. But the primary force behind this new orientation was and still is the steadfastness of the Palestinian people and their resistance to the occupation, together with the wisdom of the Palestinian leadership represented by the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, which has been shouldering its historical responsibilities vis-à-vis the future generations. Your support, together with that of all peace- and justice-loving forces in the world, has also been invaluable. While our umma always supports peace based on right, the kind of peace that safeguards mutual security and co-existence and lays solid foundations for international relations, it must be able to stand up to the challenges of the times, including the search for a just, permanent and comprehensive peace which preserves for it its rights in its own lands and guarantees its people their national rights, and makes her an active participant in maintaining peace throughout the world. In the words of the Holy Koran, "And strive in His cause as you ought to strive, (with sincerity and under discipline). He has chosen you and has imposed no difficulties on you in religion; it is the cult of your father Abraham. It is He Who has named you Muslims, both before and in this (Revelation); that the Messenger may be a witness for you, and eye be witnesses for mankind! So establish regular prayer, give regular charity

and hold fast to Allah! He is your Protector — the best to protect and the Best to help" Your Excellency, Brothers,

The main features of the settlement, which is based on international legitimacy have been clearly delineated in President Bush's speech to the joint session of the American Congress on March 6, 1991. The settlement is to be based on United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the exchange of land for peace, and the safeguarding of the national rights of the Palestinian people and the security of the region. Thus the settlement is to be built on two parallel principles: justice and security. One of the meanings we understand from this formula is the return of the occupied territories, foremost among which is Arab Jerusalem, to their rightful owners and the international recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to exercise self-determination on their national soil and the recognition of their historical rights in their land. This is the peace process supervised by both the United States and the Soviet Union has envisaged a two-track approach: a Palestinian-Israeli track and an Arab-Israeli track. We are satisfied with this formula and the concepts and principles it implies and have done all in our power to facilitate its initiation. To forestall any objections by the extremist Israeli leadership against this formula we agreed to provide the Palestinian delegation with an umbrella within the framework of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, provided that this arrangement met with the approval of our Palestinian brethren and that they would undertake to deal with the Palestinian dimension in the peace process themselves. This is indeed what happened.

The Madrid conference was convened late last October, availing the Palestinian people of the opportunity of putting forth their just cause through the joint delegation in front of the world, a cause that had been distorted and misrepresented for decades an end. The well-balanced, dignified performance of the Palestinian delegation was most effective in recasting the picture and presenting the struggle of the Palestinian people and the justice of their legitimate national demands.

The peace process also envisages multilateral negotiations in which the states of the region as well as others will discuss the regional and international aspects of the chronic Middle East conflict, which has involved such causes of conflict as population problems, refugees, water resources and the arms race, all of which have become a regional as well as an international cause of concern.

If, politically, the Palestinian problem has developed in such a way as to seem to be a problem for the people of Palestine alone, in reality it is an Arab-Islamic problem. Its solution requires active Arab-Islamic involvement. Any settlement must be based on justice and legitimacy; the rights of the Palestinian people must be restored. Cooperation, mutual understanding, and collective responsibility are essential if we are to reach a settlement that future generations will accept and defend. Preceding from firm principles and clear-headed policies, we have decided to participate in all stages of the peace process which will lead to one thing: the restoration of all occupied territories in Palestine (especially Arab Jerusalem), Jordan, the Golan Heights, and Lebanon in exchange for peace and security for all — what has come to be known as the "land for peace" formula. But this process cannot proceed in the right direction or reach its objectives without the Arab parties concerned, particularly the Muslim Arab nation of Palestine, receiving their full support.

As for the other Muslim causes, Jordan is committed, as always, to cooperate with all Islamic efforts based on the principles of our religion and international legitimacy. Comprehensive Islamic cooperation cannot be fully and effectively achieved without devoting special attention to the economic, cultural, and social objectives which touch the lives of the people and safeguard their right to express themselves freely and creatively.

One of the first things to be taken into consideration is the recognition of the changes taking place in the modern world, particularly the ever-accelerating discoveries of science and technology. The role played by science and technology in all walks of life, especially in economic development, is of the utmost importance, for the gap between us and the industrialised world is widening, and close cooperation in these areas is absolutely essential as an attempt to bridge this gap through which most of the evils that beset us are filtering.

Your Excellency, Brothers,

Drawing upon my modest but long experience in office I would like to share with you a few specific ideas delineating what I take to be the main features of a plan for a renaissance of the Muslim World:

1. Since political action begins and ends with man, it must include a full recognition of the dignity of man and his right to think freely and creatively and to participate in determining his own fate and future.
2. Since the good of the community necessitates justice, democracy becomes essential in building the just society to ensure the widest participation in thought and action in the progress towards the achievement of human rights to freedom and equality — principles inculcated by Islam, which views them as natural drives to be regulated only through divine guidance. Putting these principles into practice requires a fully integrated system that takes into consideration the cultural and economic challenges that stand in the way of their implementation. It also requires some sort of balance between

the desire for freedom and the search for social justice.

3. The single state is no longer capable of dealing with problems of its citizens alone, however strong and influential it may be, for there are regional and international dimensions in this age of mutual interdependence, which go beyond the horizons of the institutions of single states. Consequently, cooperation and openness among Islamic countries is essential. For openness, cooperation, consultation, mutual trust, and awareness of and commitment to the common interests are the basic components of an acceptable degree of integration and of the desired renaissance.
4. The most prominent causes of disagreement among us are the regional and boundary conflicts among our states. Therefore, a comprehensive Islamic plan must be drawn to settle these conflicts and differences. The plan should be formulated by a committee of arbitrators aided by a consultative body of Muslim experts distinguished for their expertise in politics and law.

5. One of the most daunting challenges that we must not sidestep is the formulation of a comprehensive development plan that covers the entire umma, a plan that relies on the umma's own rich and varied resources. Any such plan should take into consideration such issues as security and progress, problems emanating from antiquated educational and administrative systems, foreign debt, regional conflicts, scientific and technological backwardness, ineffective agricultural practices, and environmental problems. All of this requires a unified culture, clarity of vision, awareness of common interests, and a deep understanding of the rhythm of the times. In other words, I am calling for the formulation of a strategy of survival and progress and for the fulfilment of the message of Islam, whose technique are needed by the new generations more than ever.

I am confident that our umma will start a new process of stock-taking, of reviewing and assessing the present situation in the light of the modern age, which requires hard work on our part if we are to achieve progress, dignity, and security for the umma and if we are to revive its humane image, and revitalise its distinctive cultural identity as it marches forward confidently, draws comprehensive plans to spread its message in the world, to achieve solidarity, protect its rights, and rise to the mark of honour that God has reserved for it when he made it the best of all nations.

In conclusion, may God help us to be of those who invite to all that is good, and do their best, in word and deed, in the interest of our nation. History and future generations will judge us for that. I hope that we will be able to bequeath to those generations love, not hatred; unity, not disunity; solidarity, not rivalry; and transcending bitterness, not fueling it. Our source of peace of mind stems from our deep belief that God judges us by our intentions and He is cognizant of what we hold in our souls. In our whole life, we have not been but those who care for the interest of our Muslim nation. With God's help, we will continue to be so in our relationship with our Arab and Muslim Brethren. We shall always have in mind the interests of our nation and will also cherish the fact that the relations among its peoples will be above all causes of differences and dispute. Great leaders are those who guide their people towards amity and not grudge. History will never forgive anyone that does not take this noble principle into consideration. History will acknowledge those who have given generously for the sake of unity of the nation and its cohesiveness, and who remain safe from the temptation of hegemony and from the effects of sedition. May God make us of those who are judged and not judged against.

Your Excellency, Brothers,

"Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works righteousness, and says, 'I am of those who bow in Islam?' Nor can Goodness and Evil be equal. Repel (Evil) with what is better: then will be between whom and thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate!"

May God lead us to what He approves. May He guide us all to the "straight path."

Waassalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatu 'ilahi wa Barakatuhu.

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Tomba wins men's slalom

SESTRIERE, Italy (AP) — Alberto Tomba, wildly cheered by thousands of Italian fans, Tuesday captured his third World Cup race of this season winning a men's slalom in this Alpine resort.

The Italian skier, keeping up with his nickname of "la bomba" (the bomb) used his powerful, aggressive style through 72 gates of the Kandahar Course to clock a winning aggregate of 2:00.49 minutes.

Two Norwegians, Finn Christian Jagge and Ole Christian Furuseth, placed second and third respectively in 2:01.40 and 2:01.54 minutes.

Swiss Paul Accola finished fourth and kept atop the World Cup overall standings with 470 points, narrowly ahead of Tomba who piled up 460.

Tuesday's victory was Tomba's 22nd in his World Cup career — the third in this resort where he won his first ever World Cup race in 1987.

The 24-year old Italian, a double Olympic champion in 1988, was the fastest in the first heat, in 1:00.09 minutes, and had the

third best time, behind Furuseth and Accola, in the second run, in 1:00.40.

His aggregate was 0.91 seconds faster than Jagge and 1.05 seconds better than Furuseth.

Accola, who had claimed to first place in the overall cup winning three of the previous races and placing fourth in Sunday's super-giant slalom in Val d'Isere, trailed Tomba by 1.34 seconds.

Another Italian, young Fabio de Crignis, finished fifth, dropping two places from the first heat.

Austrian Thomas Stangassinger edged a third Italian, Carlo Gerosa, for sixth place, 2.38 seconds behind the winner.

Tomba nearly lost his pole as he started in the decisive second heat and said at the finish line "I was lucky that I managed to grab it again while going through the first gate."

"I have been great today in a race which was very long and exhausting. When you are tired you can make stupid mistakes. Now I am looking forward for other wins on home tracks," Tomba said.

Wright warns Liverpool against complacency

LIVERPOOL (R) — Captain Mark Wright warned Liverpool against complacency when they meet Austria's Swarovski Tirol Wednesday with a place in the UEFA Cup quarterfinals at stake.

Liverpool carry a 2-0 lead into the third round second leg clash at home against the Austrians, but have struggled on the domestic front since their victory at Ipswich two weeks ago. Third division Peterborough bundled them out of the English League Cup last Tuesday.

"There's still a job to be done even if we do have those two goals already in the bank," the England centre-back said.

"Things have not been going that well but it will be a different story if we win Wednesday. That will put us through to the last eight and give us something to aim for."

Liverpool, a dominant force in the 1980s, are a long way off the pace in the first division in 10th place 16 points adrift of leaders Leeds United.

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GOREN BRIDGE

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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South you hold: ♠A96 ♣A542 ♢J63 ♠A93
Do you open the bidding?
A.—Don't consider passing a hand that contains three aces—the ace is undervalued in the point count. However, even four-card majorities should not bid a weak four-card major when the hand is absolutely flat. Open one club.

Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold: ♠852 ♣Q10764 ♠AK ♠K43
Do you open the bidding?
A.—With a five-card major suit, 2 1/2 defensive tricks and a ruffing value and only 12 high-card points, you are on the borderline—and you should deduct 1 point for each defect, bringing its value down to 12 points. Pass.

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold: ♠QJ8 ♣QJ6 ♢Q85 ♠K43
Do you open the bidding?
A.—We know that 14 points constitute a mandatory opening bid, but is this hand worth 14? It has two flaws—it has no distributional asset and is useless—and you should deduct 1 point for each defect, bringing its value down to 12 points. Pass.

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold: ♠KJ752 ♣AJ63 ♢Q84 ♠5
Do you open the bidding?
A.—With distribution, your hand is worth 13 points, and you hold both majors. If you open the bidding, you have an easy heart rebid over any action partner might take. Bid one spade. Possession of the major suits often dictates whether you should open the bidding.

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold: ♠85 ♣85 ♢KJ752 ♠AJ63
Do you open the bidding?
A.—The same hand as above, except we have switched the major and minor suits bid values. Unless partner has opened bid values, this hand is going nowhere. Therefore, we would opt for a pass.

Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold: ♠6 ♣KQJ6542 ♢95 ♠A43
Do you open the bidding?
A.—Since the hand values to 13 points including distribution, a reasonable argument can be advanced for opening one heart. We would open the bidding, but not with one heart. The spade shortage and lack of defense suggests that a three-heart preempt would be a more descriptive action.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Edberg to return to tennis soon

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Stefan Edberg of Sweden, the world's top-ranked tennis player, will make his comeback from a knee injury in an exhibition tournament later this month. Edberg missed last week's European Community Championship in Antwerp, Belgium, with a knee injury. He also has withdrawn from this week's Grand Slam Cup in Munich, Germany. Promoter Colio Stubs said Edberg had confirmed his participation in the Colonial Mutual Classic, an eight-man exhibition to be played at Kooyong from Dec. 19-22. Karel Novacek of Czechoslovakia, ranked ninth in the world, also will compete in the grass court, round-robin event, along with Goran Prpic, who says he represents the breakaway Yugoslav Republic of Croatia, and Soviet Davis Cup player Alexander Volkov. The field is completed by Australians Wally Masur, Richard Fromberg, John Fitzgerald and Jason Stoltenberg. Kooyong was the site of the tournament to begin his preparations for the 1992 Australian Open, which will be held at the National Tennis Centre from Jan. 13-26. Edberg won two Australian Open titles on the Kooyong grass — in 1985 and 1987.

English Football League president dies

LONDON (AP) — Bill Fox, English Football League president and a fierce opponent of a proposed breakaway Premier League, has died after a short illness, league officials said Monday. Chairman of ambitious second division club Blackburn Rovers, Mr. Fox had been a member of the league's Management Committee since 1986 and had campaigned strongly for the 93-club format to be retained. The Football Association, which governs soccer in England, has proposed a premier league of the top 22 elite teams and the Football League reluctantly supported it, despite the opposition of Mr. Fox. Arthur Sandford, the league's chief executive, said the English game was poorer because of his death. "Bill Fox's friends and colleagues within the game knew him as a straightforward, uncomplicated character who was never afraid to speak his mind," Mr. Sandford said. Wealthy Blackburn, now coached by former Liverpool manager Kenny Dalglish, is pushing hard for promotion to division one after an absence of 25 years.

Australian boxer retires

PERTH, Australia (AP) — World-ranked Australian super-middleweight boxer Lou Cafaro announced his retirement Tuesday, saying a scan had indicated he suffered brain damage during his seven-year professional career. Cafaro, 30, twice held the Australian middleweight title and was Commonwealth super-middleweight champion in 1990-91. He also challenged unsuccessfully for the World Boxing Council (WBC) international super-middleweight title, losing to Britain's Kid Mito in January. Cafaro was rated among the world's top 10 super-middleweights by the WBC earlier this year. The boxer said he was suffering from memory loss and mental blackouts. "I don't know to what extent the damage is," Cafaro said in an interview with the West Australian newspaper. "Medical officers tell me I will start to get better soon. I don't know if I will fully recover." Cafaro said a motorcycle accident last year also could be partly responsible for his problems. He had a career record of 18 wins and eight losses, but had been beaten inside the distance in his last four bouts. "It was not one fight that caused the damage, it was an accumulation of fights," Cafaro said. Cafaro said in the interview that he had little recollection of his last bout. He was stopped in the 11th round of an Australian middleweight title defence by Vito Gaudiosi in Dapto on Nov. 20. "I just can't take a punch any more," Cafaro said.

Zaragoza retains WBC title

INGLEWOOD, California (AP) — Daniel Zaragoza retained his World Boxing Council (WBC) super bantamweight title with a unanimous 12-round decision over Paul Banke on Monday night. Zaragoza, of Mexico City, was making his second title defence in his second championship reign. It was his third meeting with Banke, of San Bernardino, California. Two of the three judges scored the fight 116-112 for Zaragoza, while the third had 117-113 in the Mexican's favor. Zaragoza outboxed Banke through most of the fight, connecting with sharp hooks and effectively countering punches. Neither fighter was badly hurt during the bout at the forum. Zaragoza improved to 44-5-1 with 20 wins by knockout. Banke fell to 21-6 with 11 knockouts. In the last meeting between the two, Banke rallied to knock out Zaragoza in the ninth round and claim the WBC title in April 1990. Banke made one successful defence before losing the title in November 1990 to Argentina's Pedro Decima. Zaragoza reclaimed the championship last June with a decision over Kiyoshi Hatanaka of Japan.

Sampdoria coach ponders teams record

GENOA Italy (R) — Sampdoria, who met Greek soccer champions Panathinaikos in a European Cup semifinal group match Wednesday, continue to baffle coach Vojadin Boskov. If the Italian champions play to their cup form, they should perform well in Athens Wednesday. But the malaise that has plagued them in the league — they last won on Sept. 29 and are sixth from bottom 12 points adrift of leaders AC Milan — could still surface. "Eveo I cannot explain such a difference in performance," Boskov said in an interview in Tuesday's Gazzetta dello Sport newspaper. Sampdoria, beaten six times in the league, have lost only once in nine European and Italian Cup games. "When I think of cup wins against Modena, Bari, Honved and Red Star Belgrade, I sometimes wonder if it's the same Sampdoria," Boskov said. Sampdoria, still without injured captain Roberto Mancini, are expected to be unchanged from the side held 0-0 at Foggia Sunday with Alessandro Orlando, Brazilian Cerezo, Fausto Pari and Yugoslav Srecko Katanec making up the midfield.

Oxford to sell first team players

OXFORD (R) — Oxford United, the struggling second division soccer club owned by Robert Maxwell, said Monday the entire first team was for sale. The club also said four of the six directors, including Maxwell's daughter Ghislaine, had resigned and loans provided by the late magnate would have to be repaid to the family. "They have put around £1.8 million (\$3.2 million) into the club over the past two or three years," said Managing director Pat McGeough, announcing the sale. "With interest the figure is more than £2 million (\$3.6 million) and it has got to be repaid." Kevin Maxwell, son of the tycoon whose death at sea in mysterious circumstances last month triggered the collapse of the family's debt-ridden empire, remained as chairman. "Despite the withdrawal of future financial support of the Maxwell family, the club is still solvent," said Mr. McGeough. Mr. McGeough said the club, bottom of the division and said to be losing £12,000 (\$21,000) a week, was not in receivership, administration or liquidation. He said officials were busy trying to find a new investor who would ensure the club's long-term future.

Modena joins Jordan F-1 team

LONDON (R) — Italian driver Stefano Modena has signed for the British-based Jordan Formula One team next season while compatriot Andrea de Cesaris looks set to leave. Team press officer Mark Gallagher said Tuesday that Modena, who was with Tyrrell last season, had signed a one-year contract with an option for another two years. He said the team, who finished fifth in the Constructors' Championship in their debut season this year, were very keen to retain young Italian Alessandro Zanardi. Zanardi has been testing the new Jordan Yamaha in Spain this week and team sources said while both he and de Cesaris had options to stay at Jordan, it depended on sponsors. The experienced de Cesaris has not tested with the team since the end of last season and a source said: "It is shaping up that he won't be driving for the team next season." Modena will test the new car in Spain Wednesday.

Chandler to ride for Suzuki in 1992

BRUSSELS (R) — American Doug Chandler will race alongside compatriot Kevin Schwantz in the Suzuki 500cc motorcycling team next season, officials said Tuesday. The former U.S. superbike champion replaces Belgian Didier De Radigues, who has retired after a poor season. Chandler, 26, made his 500cc debut last season on a Yamaha and finished ninth overall. He has yet to win a race. Texan Schwantz, 27, winner of five Grand Prix last season, had already signed for a sixth year with Suzuki. In the 250cc class, Suzuki said they had recruited Dutchman Wilco Zeelenberg and Spaniard Herri Torroategui.

Paris-Moscow-Peking rally in 1992

TOKYO (R) — Organisers of the Paris-Moscow-Peking motor rally hope to stage the race next year despite continuing turmoil in the Soviet Union. The 16,000 km event, the world's longest rally, was officially entered in the 1992 race calendar by the International Motor Sports Federation (FISA) last week. Organisers said Tuesday they had re-started preparations to get the rally underway in September 1992. The inaugural rally was scheduled for last September but was postponed after the abortive Soviet coup in August. Organisers said they were not optimistic about the Soviet situation but would try to get permission to allow cars to drive through the various breakaway Soviet republics. On Sunday the three Slav republics of Russia, Ukraine and Byelorussia said the Soviet Union had ceased to exist and created a commonwealth of independent states. The rally is scheduled to start in Paris on Sept. 2 and finish in Peking on Sept. 27.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 11, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: It is advisable that you carefully consider all the tasks facing you in the immediate future and to make plans to gain your most cherished aims as you let less important matters slide.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can take a good look at your property and possessions and see what needs to be done in order that they can operate more in harmony with your plans.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Your charm can be made much more attractive and appealing by listening to what some associate tell you that will remove some condition not to your liking.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You have some private matter you need and want to settle and this you can do by the attention you place upon it in conjunction with an expert.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) This is your time to make a point to show your social characteristics that can bring you the good will and active interest by friends.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You want to have a better image of yourself in the world of outside action and this can be yours if you will engage in some civic venture.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Think out some plan whereby you can make some new allies who think and perform very differently

from what you do and get them to give you benefit of their fine character.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A fine day to consider just where you are financially headed and for making a greater effort to gain the good will and active aid of experts.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You can join forces with all kinds of personalities and individuals who have the power to grant you almost anything you wish of a personal nature.

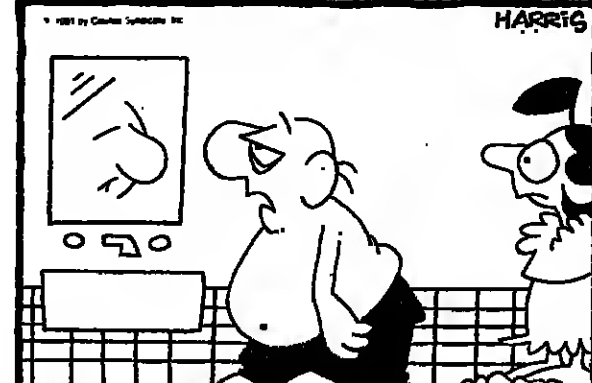
SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You need to consider and seriously where you are headed and to do what will bring you more of this world's goodies of all kinds.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Now you are able to show you are the one who does join harmoniously with friends and new allies to have a good time at your joint social delight.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) There are a number of ingenious ways by which you can get one who is very important to you help you to gain the things that mean the most to you so be receptive.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Whatever you have in mind that has to do with expanding and extending your influence and your activities beyond present boundaries is great.

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



"The way my face is sagging, someday my belly button will be on my forehead!"

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

SITOC

AHTEB

OSMACT

HUHRTS

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here:

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: CIVIL AWASH LAWYER FORCED

Answer: What an ideal husband thinks he has—AN IDEAL WIFE

THE Daily Crossword by Louis Sabin

ACROSS

1 A Simpson

5 Share

13 Social division

14 Singer Adams

16 Conductor

17 "Man" (1984)

18 Microbe

19 Article of food

20 French film

23 Slang twist

24 Winner's numbers

25 Classic composer

28 Takes place

30 Attention

31 Bishop's ballroom

32 "Eugene" (Tchaikovsky)

35 Enrolled

36 Concert instruments

41 It, money

42 Fielding

43 Scraggly unit

44 Loli's daughter

46 Frightened

50 Dog at times

52 Tijuana "this"

54 "But few" cheer

56 Showing off

58 Be ready

60 Of the ear

61 Conquer

62 — dem

63 Georgia —

64 Succeeded

65 Sign up

66 — out (make do)

67 Before, pref.

DOWN

1 River boats

2 Despoiled

3 Meat

4 Sci-fi film (1982)

5 Neophyte

6 An Astaire

7 GSA members

8 Party treat

9 Charged particle

10 Substitutes

11 Thrush

12 Antiquity old style

13 Rhea's cousin

14 Performing

15 He Na

16 Saarinen

17 Permits

18 He Na

19 Pass catchers

20 Tale of Man man

21 One — million

22 Enthusiasm

23 Boast

24 La Scala

25 Blowhard

26 Edible nut

27 Parvian

28 Winter head

29 Fish-shaped bird

30 Dried fruit

31 Scornful

32 Party treat

33 Hold fast

34 Period

35 Cosmetician

36 Laser

37 Expert

38 Ashen

39 meter (brass cover)

40 Expert

41 Ashen

Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEW YORK Date 9/12/91 CLOSE	TOKYO Date 10/12/91 CLOSE
Sterling Pound*	1.8110	1.8145
Deutsche Mark	1.5715	1.5655
Swiss Franc	1.3895	1.3878
French Franc	5.3690	5.3488**
Japanese Yen	128.28	128.32
European Currency Unit	1.2910	1.2988**

* USD Per STD
** European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Barter currency exchange rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.90	4.43	4.43	4.55
Sterling Pound	10.62	10.62	10.56	10.56
Deutsche Mark	9.43	9.43	9.43	9.37
Swiss Franc	8.00	7.93	7.87	7.81
French Franc	10.00	9.93	9.87	9.75
Japanese Yen	6.31	6.09	5.84	5.50
European Currency Unit	10.50	10.37	10.34	10.06

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	369.00	6.95	Silver	4.04	.088

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.678	0.680
Sterling Pound	1.2285	1.2346
Deutsche Mark	0.4328	0.4350
Swiss Franc	0.4896	0.4920
French Franc	0.1267	0.1273
Japanese Yen*	0.5880	0.5306
Dutch Guilder	0.3841	0.3850
Swedish Krona	0.1181	0.1187
Italian Lira*	0.0571	0.0574
Belgian Franc	0.02101	0.02112

* Per 100

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7690	1.7770
Lebanese Lira*	0.0769	0.0775
Saudi Riyal	0.1805	0.1815
Kuwaiti Dinar	-	-
Omani Riyal	0.1837	0.1846
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2170
Omani Riyal	1.7350	1.7440
UAE Dirham	0.1837	0.1846
Greek Drachma*	0.3735	0.3800
Cypriot Pound	1.4916	1.5232

* Per 100
CAS Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	6/12/91	Close	9/12/91	Close
All-Share	127.50		127.77	
Banking Sector	105.74		106.11	
Insurance Sector	127.29		128.01	
Industry Sector	159.57		159.79	
Services Sector	144.86		144.06	

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One Sterling	1.8120/30	U.S. dollar	1.8120/30
One U.S. dollar	1.1360/65	Canadian dollar	1.5690/5700
	1.5690/5700	Deutsche marks	1.7680/80
	1.3855/68	Dutch guilders	32.32/36
	5.3585/3635	Swiss francs	1188/1189
	128.10/20	Belgian francs	5.7480/7530
	5.7480/7530	French francs	6.1875/1925
	6.1875/1925	Italian lire	6.1025/75
	6.1025/75	Japanese yen	170.35/85
One ounce of gold	370.35/85	Swedish crowns	
		Norwegian crowns	
		Danish crowns	
		U.S. dollars	

Workers rights, wealth sharing remain thorny EC issues

MAASTRICHT, Netherlands (R) — European Community (EC) leaders clashed angrily over workers' rights and wealth sharing on the second day of a crucial summit Tuesday after agreeing to drop any reference to federalism from a new union treaty.

Officials said an overall treaty on political, economic and monetary union, enshrining closer EC integration, hung in the balance with wide differences on several key issues.

Britain dug in its heels, branding a compromise proposal on social policy unacceptable. France and Spain retorted that the social provisions were too weak and President Francois Mitterrand said Britain should simply opt out of social rules as it plans to do on a single EC currency.

Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez also demanded a clear commitment to redistribute wealth to poorer EC states.

"It's street fighting in there this morning," said a Dutch diplomat emerging from the summit session.

The agreement to replace "federal vocation" with a reference to an "ever closer union" in the treaty preamble followed a breakthrough Monday when finance ministers agreed on the introduction of a single European currency by 1999.

Britain had threatened to veto any treaty containing the dreaded "F-word".

Conservative British Prime Minister John Major objected to extending EC powers over labour law, which London wants could make Europe uncompetitive with the United States and Japan.

France's Socialist government

fought for minimum European social standards. European Affairs Minister Elisabeth Guigou said: "We don't want just a Europe of travelling salesmen, a big free trade zone. These elements are important for us and we want to see them in the treaty."

The Netherlands, chairing the summit as current president of the EC, slipped revised sections of a draft treaty under other delegations' doors before dawn.

"It will be a global agreement or nothing. It will all be decided in the last hour," the Dutch diplomat said.

For the first time the draft mentioned the creation of a so-called cohesion fund next year to share money from richer states with Spain, Ireland, Portugal and Greece.

But Spain, handicapped by a consumer boom that has boosted

its VAT-based payments to the EC budget, also want a fairer mechanism for setting national contributions to Brussels.

One diplomat said: "It won't be decided until (German Chancellor Helmut) Kohl stands up to Gonzalez and says 'you shut up or there's no money'."

The new text held out the prospect of opening negotiations next year with Austria and Sweden on joining the Community once the existing members have overhauled the bloc's finances.

The Dutch presidency hoped the summit, capping a year of tortuous negotiations, would be more inclined to strike an overall deal after finance ministers agreed Monday that at least some EC states would merge their currencies before 1999.

United Airlines wins bidding for most of Pan Am assets

NEW YORK (AP) — The remnants of Pan American (Pan Am) World Airways were put on the block in a bankruptcy court auction that stretched into late Monday night, and United Airlines emerged the big winner.

United, which had tried this summer to buy Pan Am's route system in Latin America for almost \$200 million, ended up paying \$135 million in the auction that was ordered after Pan Am stopped flying Wednesday.

But the auction netted \$160 million for Pan Am's creditors because Delta Air Lines bid \$25 million for a route from New York to Mexico City.

In bidding that went on for hours in a packed courtroom, United, the nation's second largest air carrier, was able to beat out a bid of \$155 million from American Airlines, the nation's largest carrier, and Delta, the no. 3 carrier.

United's \$135 million bid was for a package that included most of Pan Am's lucrative routes into Latin America, as well as takeoff and landing slots in New York, Washington and Chicago.

American and Delta teamed up in the bidding hours earlier, after United had made an offer of \$84 million, which was greater than the combined total of bids made by several other airlines. After that, bids were increased in increments of millions of dollars each.

U.S. bankruptcy judge Cornelius Blackshear said he wanted to preserve as many jobs as possible. United said it would also it would also make job offers to up to 1,000 former Pan Am employees over the next two years.

Earlier, United accused the American-Delta bidding team of trying to push the price too high, by suggesting American might not be able to close on the deal. American already has extensive service into Latin America, and federal regulators have expressed concerns that it have some competition in the region.

Assuming the government approves United's purchase of the Latin American routes, United will be poised to compete head-to-head in the region with American, its archrival.

The package apparently will get United into a variety of destinations in Brazil, Argentina,

Uruguay, Venezuela and Chile. Prospective buyers for Pan Am's assets ranged from the giants of the industry to charter outfits to the reincarnation of Braniff Airlines, itself a ward of federal bankruptcy court protection.

Starved for money after years of losses and heavy debts, Pan Am collapsed last Wednesday, becoming the third big U.S. airline to die in bankruptcy court this year. Eastern Airlines and Midway Airlines were the other two victims.

The auction was held in a courtroom packed with angry unemployed former Pan Am workers who jeered comments made by Delta, formerly considered Pan Am's financial saviour and now regarded by Pan Am workers as backstabber.

Delta's abrupt decision to withdraw from a critical financing deal for Pan Am became Pan Am's death blow. Delta has denied acting improperly, but Pan Am's creditors are suing the airline for damages.

A hearing on the lawsuit was set for Jan. 30.

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Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

Gorbachev resignation is 'not far off'

MOSCOW (Agencies) — A top aide to Mikhail Gorbachev said Tuesday the Soviet leader, fighting for his political life, would soon bow to the inevitable and resign.

A Soviet News Agency reporter told Reuters that senior adviser Georgy Shakhnazarov had informed a meeting of young politicians: "Such a situation is forming that we will not have to wait long for the resignation of President Gorbachev and his team."

The independent Interfax agency carried a similar report. Gorbachev's post as Soviet president has been on the line since Russia, Byelorussia and Ukraine announced at the weekend they were creating a commonwealth to replace the Soviet Union.

First Deputy Russian Prime Minister Gennadiy Burbulis Tuesday said the new commonwealth had not ruled out firing a post for Mr. Gorbachev, who wants to recreate the Soviet Union as a loose confederation of sovereign states.

Mr. Gorbachev Monday challenged the legality of the commonwealth declaration and called for a session of the senior legislature to discuss the matter.

The chief spokesman for President Gorbachev said the Soviet leader was not considering stepping down from his post.

Asked at a briefing whether Mr. Gorbachev had considered resigning in the last two days, Andrei Grachev replied: "Today he has no such thought."

But Mr. Shakhnazarov, a long-time presidential aide on political matters, said Mr. Gorbachev's position was becoming untenable after the signing of the commonwealth accord, which

left no role for a central administration. "If the decision adopted at Minsk is implemented, the union organs will have to wind up their work," said Mr. Shakhnazarov, describing the accord as a "pure coup d'etat."

Mr. Gorbachev Monday attacked the accord, saying leaders of three republics had no right to decide the Soviet Union's fate.

He and Kazakh leader Nursultan Nazarbayev, a key ally, want to summon the supreme legislature to discuss both the Minsk accord and Mr. Gorbachev's plans for a union of sovereign states.

But Sergei Shakhrai, senior adviser to Russian leader Boris Yeltsin, said Tuesday the republic no longer considered the Congress of Deputies to be a legal organ.

"The Congress of Deputies no longer exists. Attempts to convene this body and take decisions would be unconstitutional," he told a news conference.

Byelorussian leader Stanislav Shushkevich said he saw little point in summoning the Congress, TASS reported.

He thought that to summon a Congress for the sake of preserving the presidential structure is not a serious suggestion.

The Ukrainian representatives will not attend, and the majority of Byelorussians will also be absent, the agency quoted him as saying. The agency quoted him as saying a new conference in Minsk.

The three Slav republics, which account for more than 70 per cent of the Soviet population, could block a quorum even if a number of their delegates defied their own leadership and attended a session of the 2,000-

strong Congress.

Mr. Burbulis, attending the same news conference as Mr. Shakhrai, said the commonwealth members had not specifically intended to leave Mr. Gorbachev in the cold.

"I think Mikhail Gorbachev, having substantial experience of political life and being essential at one stage of our reforms, can be constructively involved. His experience can be used to support our main historical logic," he said.

With the country in shambles, fierce competition has emerged among the former Soviet Union's most powerful leaders over who has the right to decide the fate of the nation.

President Gorbachev disputed the claim by Russia, Ukraine, Byelorussia that they were entitled to create a new commonwealth as the original signers of the 1922 treaty that formed the Soviet Union.

Mr. Gorbachev has been fighting hard to form a new union with the three Slav republics, as well as Kazakhstan and the four Central Asian republics, with the hope that the other four republics might sign on.

The Soviet leader said each republic had the right to secede from the union, but that "the fate of the multinational state can't be decided by the will of the leaders of three republics."

Russian President Boris Yeltsin's decision to drop plans to join Mr. Gorbachev's proposed union and seek an alliance with the other two Slav republics was prompted by Ukraine's overwhelming vote for independence on Dec. 1.

Mr. Yeltsin, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk and Byelorussian

leader Stanislav Shushkevich jointly announced Sunday the formation of a new "Commonwealth of Independent States" open to all sharing their values.

The new Commonwealth would retain central control over nuclear weapons, but it declared Soviet laws void, a move Mr. Gorbachev called "illegal and dangerous" that "can only worsen the chaos and anarchy in society."

Mr. Yeltsin held out the possibility of a role in the Commonwealth for Mr. Gorbachev, who like other key political figures sat at the meeting were caught by surprise by the announcement and briefed only at a Kremlin meeting Monday.

Clearly miffed by the Slav gambit, Mr. Nazarbayev, said he believed Mr. Gorbachev "still has not exhausted his opportunities" as a leader.

Mr. Nazarbayev has been a firm supporter of Mr. Gorbachev's union treaty, and as the leader of a republic with nuclear weapons on its territory, cannot be dismissed lightly by the Commonwealth.

However, Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said Mr. Yeltsin spoke with Mr. Nazarbayev after the announcement of the commonwealth and there was "no dissent" between them on nuclear issues.

Mr. Nazarbayev urged Russia, Byelorussia, Ukraine to join him in a special pact on keeping centralized control over the weapons until they are safely dismantled.

In an apparent compromise to both Mr. Gorbachev and Mr. Nazarbayev, Mr. Yeltsin agreed Monday to let republic legislatures consider the commonwealth plan "parallel" with Mr. Gorbachev's union treaty. It was

unclear whether that meant implementing the commonwealth. Byelorussian leader Shushkevich said Monday there were no obstacles to "other non-Slavic republics" joining the commonwealth.

It was unclear who would next seize the political initiative. The three Slav republics Monday appeared determined to confront the grave economic breakdown, which has aggravated the political crisis.

Yegor Gaidar, Russia's minister of economics and finance, told Russian television the three republics had agreed to coordinate their economic reforms, including the eventual introduction of separate currencies.

Mr. Gaidar said Russia would delay by two weeks until Jan. 2 plans to free prices on most goods. Ukraine and Byelorussia pledged to increase deliveries of consumer goods and food to Russia, which suffers severe shortages.

Meanwhile world leaders kept a nervous eye Monday on the disintegrating Soviet Union, expressing concern about its nuclear weapons and whether the republics might erupt in warfare.

European Community (EC) leaders interrupted their meeting in the Dutch town of Maastricht on attempts to unify the European nations to discuss the breakup of the Soviet Union. They decided to send an envoy to the new Commonwealth of Slav Republics.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said in Maastricht the EC would make clear to the commonwealth that agreements made by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev with the West — including arms control and foreign debt — "can't just be shrugged off."

Attacks continue on Osijek

ZAGREB (AP) — Serb-dominated forces resumed heavy shelling of the eastern Croatian city of Osijek Tuesday, and the federal army prepared to withdraw from its two remaining military facilities in Zagreb.

The attacks on Osijek, which local defence officials said began at about 8:30 a.m. (0730 GMT), followed a day in which fighting subsided in Croatia. The rival republics of Serbia and Croatia were discussing the proposed deployment of thousands of U.N. peacekeeping troops.

Osijek, one of the last major Croatian strongholds in the republic's eastern Slavonia region, came under mortar and artillery fire from the nearby villages of Tenja and Klisa, defence officials said.

Serb-dominated forces stepped up attacks on the city after taking Vukovar to the south in mid-November. That gave them control of a swath of Croatia along the Danube River.

Fighting was also reported on the central front along the main Zagreb-Belgrade Highway.

Meanwhile, the federal army was to begin withdrawing equipment from a technical schooling centre and an aircraft repair facility in Zagreb, the Croatian capital, said Ed Koestel, spokesman for the European Community (EC) monitoring mission in Zagreb.

The military was also to formally hand over to Croatian authorities the barracks at the Pleso Airport which had been evacuated earlier. The withdrawals from the Zagreb area were part of an agreement for the army to evacuate all its facilities in non-combat areas of Croatia. Croatian forces had besieged some of the army bases.

Preparations were also being made for an exchange of prisoners Tuesday, monitored by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

About 1,050 prisoners of war held by the Croats and 550 Croats captured by the Serb-dominated federal army were to be freed, officials said.

In Belgrade, the federal and Serbian capital, U.N. sources quoted special U.N. envoy Cyrus Vance as saying Monday that all sides to the conflict had reached an agreement under which peacekeepers would be placed at trouble spots, and not along demarcation lines or borders.

Croatia had originally sought peacekeepers along its border with Serbia, rather than within Croatia itself.

Serbia seeks to expand its territory as part of any settlement of the war, but Croatia wants the current borders — drawn up after World War II — to be maintained.

COLUMN

Clinic holds party for 200 test tube children

LONDON (R) — The 200 children at a weekend party near Cambridge in England had something special to share. All began life as embryos frozen at minus 200 degrees Centigrade. The party which brought together youngsters from as far away as the United States and Iceland was held at Bourn Hall, a test tube baby clinic which introduced its frozen embryo replacement programme in 1983. "No other fertility treatment centre in the world has achieved anywhere near this number of 'deep freeze' children," said its scientific director, Dr. Michael MacNamee. Participants included Keith and Siobhan Gower with their son Thomas, the centre's 200th frozen embryo baby who was born earlier this year.

Alaska bachelors seek mates to warm cold nights

TALKEETNA, Alaska (R) — Here is the shadow of Mount McKinley, the days are short, the nights are cold and the bachelors are lonely. So far the 11th year, members of the loosely confederated Talkeetna Bachelor Society Saturday night abandoned their remote cabins, travelled to this snow-blanketed town of 500, stepped onto an auction block at a local bar and invited all unmarried area women to begin bidding for dates. The Talkeetna Bachelor Ball and Auction, best-known of Alaska matchmaking events, draws on Alaska's reputation as a wild land overburdened with unattached men seeking women. In honour of the event, one bachelor known only as "dirty Joe" emerged from a hotel room freshly bathed and perfumed, with his hair and beard combed, wearing a tuxedo, wolf-skin hat and mukluks — traditional Eskimo boots. But the bachelor ball revealed that even tiny Talkeetna has been touched by 1990 restraint. The recession was blamed for low bids this year. And waitresses at the Latitude 62 Bar, site of the auction, also passed out condoms for bidders mindful of the threat of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). The reality is that despite revelry, the Alaska matchmaking business has fallen on hard times.

Mass rapist sentenced to 14 years in jail

SYDNEY (R) — A mass rapist whose victims included women, girls and an 11-year-old boy was sentenced to 14 years jail by an Australian court. Terry Williamson, 22, pleaded guilty to 19 charges relating to attacks on the boy and 10 women and girls aged between five and 43. Supreme Court Judge Ray Loveday said Mr. Williamson had targeted people living in Wollongong, 60 kilometres south of Sydney, between 1989 and 1990. During his reign of terror, doors and windows were barred, women and girls refused to leave their homes at night and graffiti was daubed on buildings demanding officers on all men, he said. The youngest victim, a five-year-old girl, was abducted and raped after Williamson was talked out of sexually assaulting her heavily pregnant mother.

Scientists identify gene link to hypertension

SYDNEY (R) — Australian scientists said they had identified for the first time a gene that makes people more susceptible to high blood pressure, or hypertension. The breakthrough came after tests on a range of genes in people with high and normal blood pressure and found the "insulin receptor gene" differed between the two groups, according to research Professor Ross Morris. "It was like a glimmer of light when we discovered this," Dr. Morris of the University of Sydney's Physiology Department said. "We know that hypertension is caused by several genes and we've found the first one." Mr. Morris told Reuters. About 20 per cent of people in Western countries suffer from hypertension, which is a major cause of heart attacks and strokes. The university said in a statement. Dr. Morris said it had been known that genetics was a major influence on blood pressure. "But the genes need a trigger and the most popular is a high salt intake. Others include stress, a high fat diet and alcohol," he said. Dr. Morris said that when all the genes were identified, a simple blood test would be able to determine who was at risk of developing hypertension.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

N. Korean Premier in Seoul for talks

SEOUL (R) — A grime-faced, grey-coated North Korean Premier Yon Hyong-Muk arrived in the South Tuesday asking whether talks aimed at ending four decades of cold war confrontation on the heavily armed peninsula should continue. In a pessimistic arrival statement, Mr. Yon voiced disappointment over the slow progress of the talks between the premiers of the two Koreas that began in September 1990 and are now entering their fifth round. However, he expressed hope that "fair measures" would resolve the Korean nuclear controversy. "Today the Korean people cannot conceal their gloom over the slow progress of the talks which continued for more than a year, Mr. Yon said in the statement. "Many people raise the naive and plain question of whether there is a need for the lip-service talks to continue," he said. "Now the time has come for both sides to respond to this reasonable question. This round of talks will be the threshold on which we will be able to weigh the future of the North-South high-level talks and is an important chance to examine each other's will toward peace," Mr. Yon said.

Hong Kong departs 28 more Vietnamese

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong sent home 28 more Vietnamese boat people against their will Tuesday and the British colony's governor said deportations were vital to stop other Vietnamese leaving their homeland. "It is very important to get the message across in Vietnam that people who are not genuine refugees have to go back to Vietnam," Governor Sir David Wilson told reporters. Tuesday's deportation was the second forced repatriation under a deal between Britain and Vietnam to start clearing tens of thousands of Vietnamese from crowded in Hong Kong. "After the first repatriation operation... the number of people coming from Vietnam dropped off very sharply," Sir David said. On arrival at Hanoi's Adi Bai Airport they walked off the plane unassisted, some smiling, and boarded a bus. "It went very well," said Jacques Mouchet, of the Hanoi office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

East Timor shooting reconstructed

DILI, East Timor (R) — Indonesian troops who opened fire on unarmed civilians in East Timor a month ago, killing more than 100 by some accounts, recreated the event Tuesday at the behest of government investigators. "All the soldiers were there," Mr. Djelani, the Supreme Court judge who is heading a government commission, told reporters. The reenactment was at sunrise, apparently to avoid journalists who have been following Djelani around Dili, the East Timor capital. He gave out details of what happened. Jakarta says 19 people were killed when the soldiers fired into a crowd of mourners on Nov. 12 in a cemetery in Dili. Indonesia has come under international attack over the shooting and Monday the United States urged Jakarta to come up with a credible and complete investigation and discipline those responsible. "Canada said it was suspending approval of new aid projects to Indonesia because of the incident. President Suharto set up the commission three weeks ago just before going on a world tour and charged it to be independent. Mr. Suharto has cut short a visit to Senegal, where he was due to give a speech to the Organisation of Islamic Conference later Tuesday, the official Antara News Agency said.

Burkina Faso opposition leader killed

OUAGADOUGOU (R) — A leading opponent of Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaore was assassinated and another was wounded in separate attacks in the capital, medical and opposition sources said Tuesday. The country's main opposition coalition, the Coordination of Democratic Forces, went into emergency session amid fears of increased political unrest in the country. The opposition boycotted presidential elections last week. Clement Ouédraogo, a former number two in Mr. Compaore's military government, was killed Monday night when two attackers on a motorcycle lobbed a grenade into his car, the sources said. He and his wife had stopped at an intersection near the Hotel Independence in the centre of Ouagadougou, the sources said. Mr. Ouédraogo was killed instantly and his wife suffered serious leg wounds, hospital sources said. At about the same time, University Professor Moutar Tall was wounded in the shoulder when unidentified assailants fired a machinegun at him as he was driving in a forested area of the city, opposition sources said. Mr. Tall, secretary-general of the group of Revolutionary Democrats, was being treated in hospital, medical sources said.

Puerto Rico sends pro-U.S. message

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Statehood advocates Monday savoured a referendum upset that their party leader said sends a "strong message" to congress that Puerto Ricans want closer ties with the United States. Meanwhile, Gov. Rafael Hernandez Colon, who wants Puerto Rico to remain a U.S. commonwealth with increased autonomy, came under attack from both inside and outside his party. He has pushed for the anti-statehood bill that was soundly rejected in Sunday vote. Many saw Sunday's vote as a sign of his waning popularity after seven years in office. In recent years, he has pushed aggressively to discourage a closer relationship with the United States. With virtually all ballots counted, election officials Monday said "no" votes totaled 53 per cent and "yes" votes totaled 44.9 per cent. The remaining 2.1 per cent were blank, null or being reviewed.

Japan's troop deployment bill fails to pass

TOKYO (AP) — Faced with stiff opposition, the governing Liberal Democratic Party has given up on efforts this year to pass a controversial bill allowing Japanese troops to take part in international peacekeeping operations, officials said Tuesday.

The bill's postponement is an embarrassment for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party as well as for Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, who had promised after taking office last month to get it passed quickly. The current parliamentary session officially ends Tuesday.

The bill, which would authorise the dispatch of Japanese ground troops overseas for the first time since World War II to take part in U.N. peacekeeping operations, still stands a good chance of approval in the upper house next year, officials believe. It has already passed the lower house.

Nonetheless, the delay represents a jarring setback for Mr. Miyazawa's government at a time when his leadership and integrity

are being questioned.

"Unfortunately, I don't think you'll find anyone praising Miyazawa's leadership now," said Yoko Kurahara, a member of the prime minister's party faction. He said "There is no possibility" the measure will pass this session.

Mr. Kurahara added "there is a possibility that because of the strong resistance from the opposition, this bill will be scrapped" next year. If that happens, Mr. Miyazawa's cabinet might have to resign, he said.

Mr. Miyazawa became prime minister amid high expectations about his expertise in international affairs and ability to exercise leadership, unlike his predecessor Toshiki Kaifu, who was perceived as a puppet of the party's power brokers.

President George Bush is scheduled to visit Tokyo next month, and the bill's passage would have provided Mr. Miyazawa with a fitting response to criticism that

Japan is not pulling its weight in international politics. Japan came under fire for not contributing personnel to the allied forces in the Gulf war.

The decision to postpone the measure — coming almost 50 years to the day after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor — was a fitting reminder of how little Japan has come to terms with its militarist past.

Polls indicate a majority of Japanese still oppose the dispatch of troops abroad. Leftist opposition parties say such a move would violate the postwar constitution, which renounces the use of military force to settle overseas disputes.

The government has also been stung by criticism from important Asian neighbours such as China and South Korea whose people endured Japanese aggression before and during World War II.

Both countries have warned that the bill could be the first step towards renewed Japanese militarism.

U.N. votes to set up arms register

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The General Assembly overwhelmingly endorsed a landmark resolution Monday establishing a U.N. conventional arms register to which all countries are asked to provide annual data on weapons imports and exports.

Pending expansion of the register to cover broader categories of weapons, U.N. members are also invited to furnish background information on military stocks and procurement of domestically produced arms.

The first registration is to take place by April 30, 1993, in respect of the calendar year 1992.

The resolution, and initiative by Britain, its European Community partners and Japan, was endorsed by a vote of 150 in favour and none against, with two abstentions — by Cuba and Iraq.

China was among 14 countries that were either absent or did not take part in the vote.

The resolution was called up from the Assembly's main political committee where the vote on Nov. 15 was 106 in favour, with Cuba casting the sole negative vote and eight countries abstaining — China, North Korea, Iraq, Myanmar (Burma), Oman, Pakistan, Singapore and Sudan.

The United States and the Soviet Union were among more than 50 sponsors of the resolution.

The original sponsors, all industrialised countries, sought to confine the register to conventional arms transfers.

But the text was somewhat modified in committee to meet objections, particularly by developing countries that rely on arms imports for their defence.

They said the arms register should be as comprehensive as possible and include details of domestic weapons procurement and stockpiles.

When the resolution came up for endorsement in the Assembly plenary, Cuba said it had agreed to change its vote from a "no" to an abstention in response to appeals by some of the co-sponsors, even though the text was "partial and selective in nature."

Cuba hoped the co-sponsors would be prepared to show greater flexibility next year.

Several countries which abstained in committee, including North Korea, Oman, Pakistan and Singapore, voted for the resolution in the plenary.

Syria, which voted for the resolution in committee, said it did

not take part in the vote in the plenary because the text mentioned only conventional arms and did not cover weapons of mass destruction.

The resolution, designed to foster greater openness in weapons transfers, notes that "excessive and destabilising arms build-up pose a threat to national, regional and international peace and security."

Japan Tuesday bailed the adoption of United Nations resolution on the arms trade as "an epoch-making event."

The resolution was adopted Monday establishing a register of conventional arms for which all countries are asked to provide annual data on weapons imports and exports.

"It is an epoch-making event that the resolution was adopted at the plenary session of the United Nations by an overwhelming majority," Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe said in a statement.

"Japan hopes that the awareness and the sense of responsibility of the international community on the issue of arms transfers and proliferation will be further enhanced under this register system," Mr. Watanabe said.

NATO bid to link with European Security Forum suffers blow

BRUSSELS (R) — Plans to give NATO a seat in a pan-European Security Forum and perhaps use alliance forces to help solve crises across the continent have run into trouble at the first hurdle, diplomatic sources said.

Ambassadors from NATO nations discussed Monday the idea to ask for the alliance to be given a seat in the 38-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), but France and Belgium expressed reservations.

"There is definitely a problem with this," said one alliance source, who asked not to be identified.

All 16 members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) are members of the CSCE, which groups European nations with the United States and Canada. The alliance is not involved as an institution.

Some NATO members, including the United States, would like to use alliance forces, equipment or intelligence outside the territory of member nations, to help to solve crises such as the one in Yugoslavia if asked by the CSCE.

The idea of using NATO troops outside the territory of member nations is highly controversial and has been blocked repeatedly by France and some other nations that want the alliance to remain purely defensive.

Gaining a seat at CSCE meetings was intended as the first step towards using NATO forces in that way and overcoming what is widely seen as Western impotence in the face of major crises in Europe.

The plan would ensure NATO retains a major role in the post-cold war era, as a potential firefighter to deal with nationalist or

ethnic conflicts the West fears could flare in Europe — but outside the alliance's geographical limits.

NATO sources said Secretary-General Manfred Woerner had intended to push the plan hard as an answer to critics who say the world's only functioning military alliance now has only a minor role to play.

France, which resents U.S. leadership of NATO and wants to set up more independent European defences, opposes any extension of the alliance's responsibilities and repeated its position at Monday's meeting.

"The French, with some support from the Belgians, do not want NATO to become any sort of supranational organisation like the European Community," said another NATO source. "They also do not want NATO to look as if it is interfering with the

and for refusing to offer membership or security guarantees to the new democracies of Eastern Europe."

A top NATO official suggested the idea publicly for the first time last Friday and found immediate agreement from Soviet counterparts at a conference on European security in Brussels.

"This is a far-reaching idea... there are quite a few people thinking in these terms," said Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Gebhardt von Moltke. "What do we do if there are threats to European stability? Do we sit back?"

NATO, with a military structure that integrates its member nations, has great experience in coordinating various armed forces and is led by the world's only remaining military superpower — the United States.

The Western alliance had been criticised, Mr. von Moltke said, for not doing enough to try to resolve the crisis in Yugoslavia

He said using NATO forces under the auspices of the CSCE could solve the long-standing internal dispute, since troops could be used only at the request of CSCE members — therefore avoiding the view that the alliance was acting unilaterally.

The idea is the latest in a string of proposals to strengthen the CSCE, currently little more than a forum for discussions on human rights and international codes of conduct that requires full consensus to take any real action.

It was born in the 1970s, but gained institutions only last year after the collapse of communism. Most countries involved want to give it more powers at a summit of the 38 member nations in Helsinki next March.

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